



# lonely planet

MAGAZINE  
ASIA

NOVEMBER/  
DECEMBER 2015

# MEXICO

Explore mythical  
temples and meet  
colourful locals

**Win!**

A 2-NIGHTS' STAY AT  
AUREUM PALACE HOTEL  
& RESORT INLE,  
MYANMAR

**CITY AT A  
GLANCE**

Culture  
and cuisine  
in iconic  
Sydney

# Visions of beauty

Grand architecture,  
sweeping natural vistas and  
colourful seascapes villages

**EMBARK ON A PILGRIMAGE  
ACROSS SHIKOKU**

# 6

**MINI GUIDES** MANCHESTER, BRUSSELS, MONACO, ZAGREB, ALGARVE, BUDAPEST

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Issues





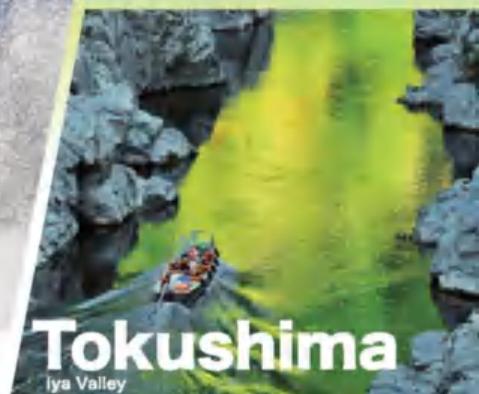
**Ehime**  
Dogo Hot Spring



**Kagawa**  
Ritsurin Garden



**Kochi**  
Cape Ashizuri



**Tokushima**  
Iya Valley



Discover the beauty of nature,  
impressively delicious cuisine, centuries of history,  
and hot springs to heal the body and mind  
— Shikoku, Japan.



**Ehime**

**Uwajima Taimeshi (Sea Bream Rice)**

Uwajima Taimeshi is a dish originally created by fishermen to make the most of fresh red sea bream with a quick and easy recipe.



**Kagawa**

**Sanuki udon**

It is known for the firm texture of the noodles. For udon toppings, there are for example shrimp tempura and vegetable tempura.



**Kochi**

**Sawachi dishes**

The colorful presentation of Sawachi reflects the heart and soul of Tosa. Sawachi is an arrangement of sashimi, tataki, sushi, and other seasonal foods presented on a large colorful porcelain platter.



**Tokushima**

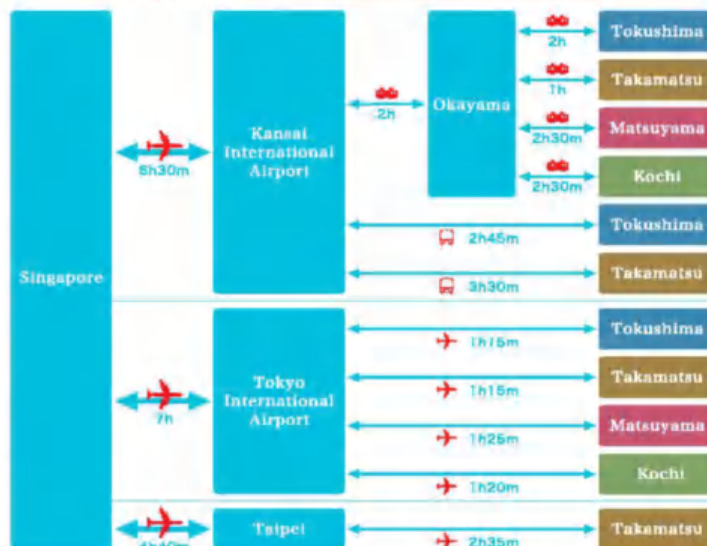
**Tokushima ramen**

It features a strongly-flavored soup that would enable one to finish a whole serving of rice without anything else.



**Singapore**

With handy access,  
Shikoku is even closer!



**THE OFFICIAL TOURISM GUIDE FOR SHIKOKU, JAPAN**

<http://www.tourismshikoku.org/>







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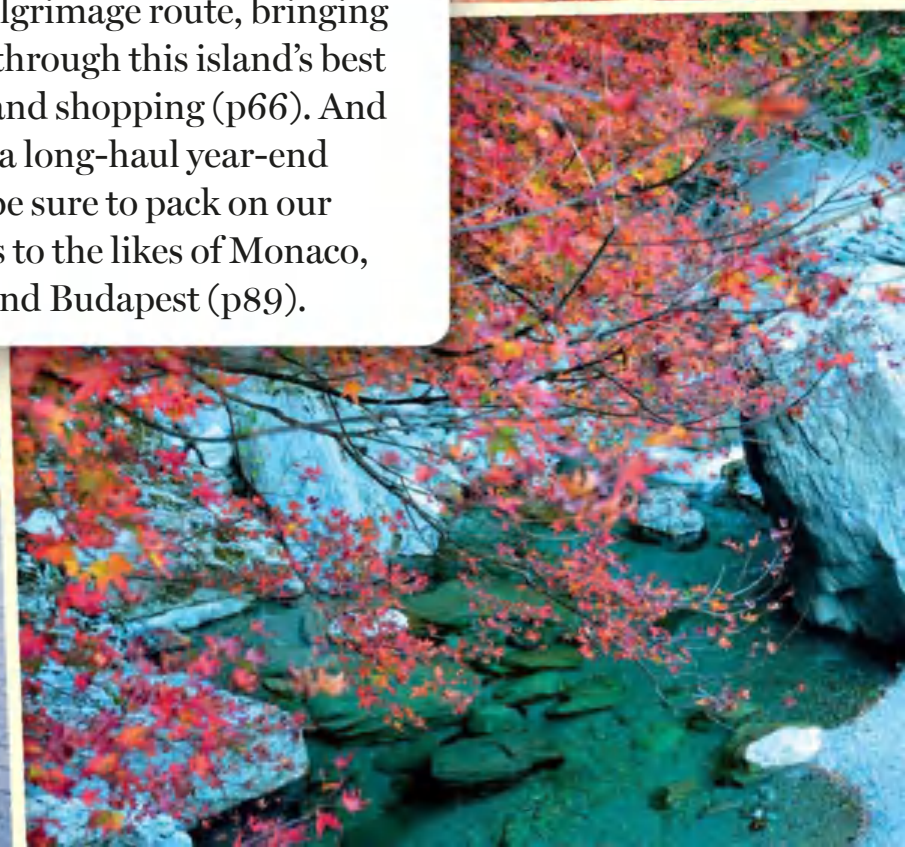


MELISSA LORRAINE CHUA,  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR



## *This month...*

...we're sending you on a mission to uncover the most beautiful sights on Earth – from ancient buried treasures to sweeping vistas of nature's greatest marvels, see the planet as you've never seen it before through the eyes of our awe-inspired panel of experts and photographers (p36). Go on a Great Escape through jungle-filled Mexico to encounter lost cities, mythical temples, colourful locals and tongue-scorching eats (p51). As autumn reaches its peak, verdant landscapes turn fiery crimson, and you'll find the weather perfect for a spiritual adventure through Shikoku's famed pilgrimage route, bringing you cross-country through this island's best in history, culture and shopping (p66). And for those planning a long-haul year-end escape to Europe, be sure to pack on our handy Mini Guides to the likes of Monaco, Brussels, Algarve and Budapest (p89).





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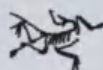


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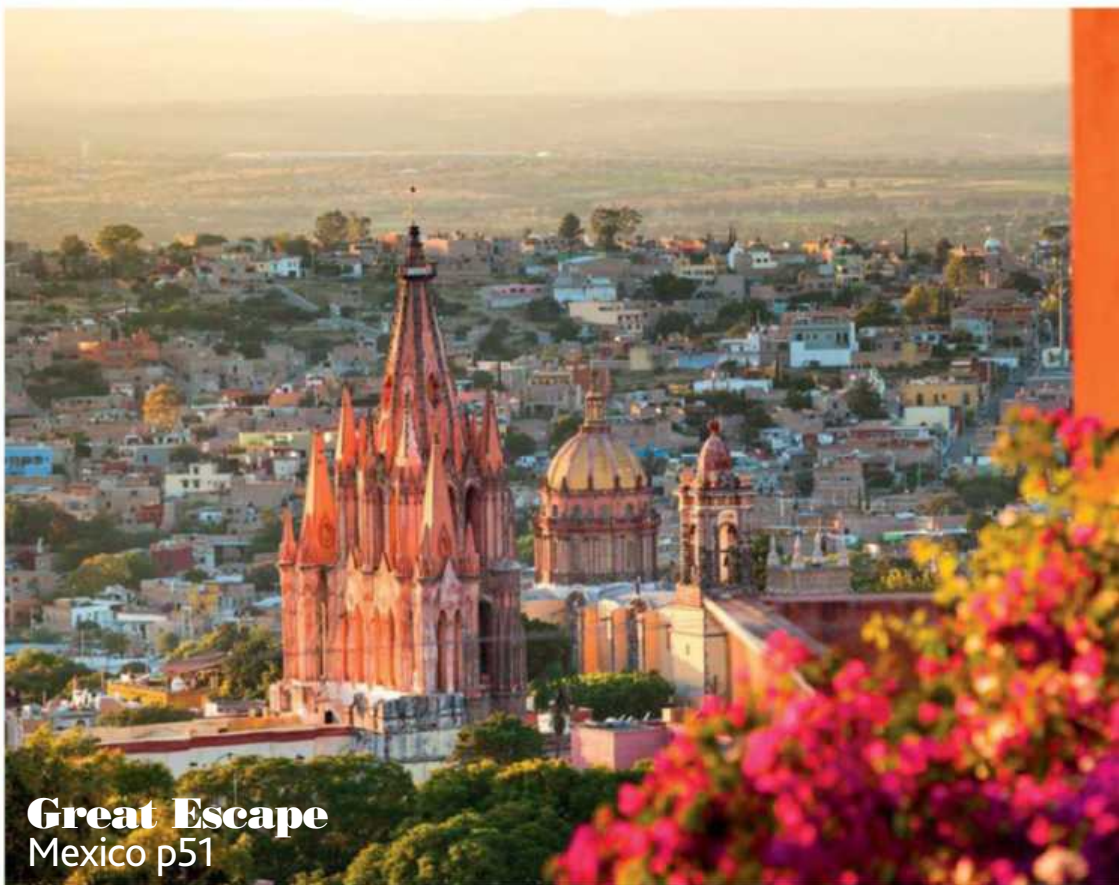
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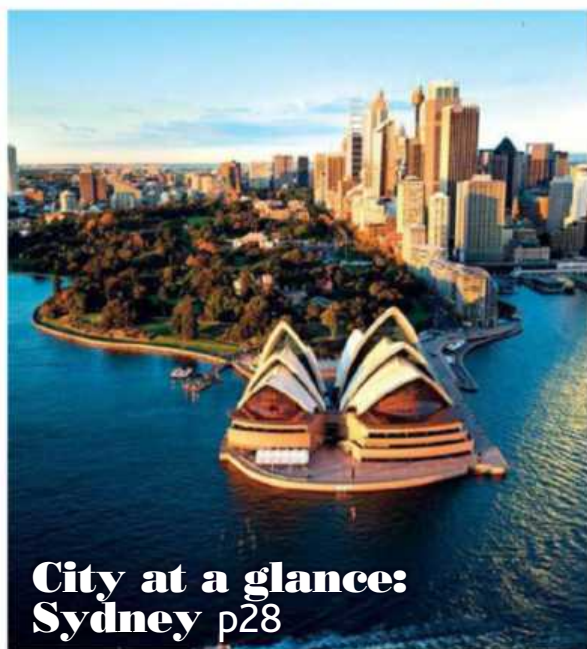
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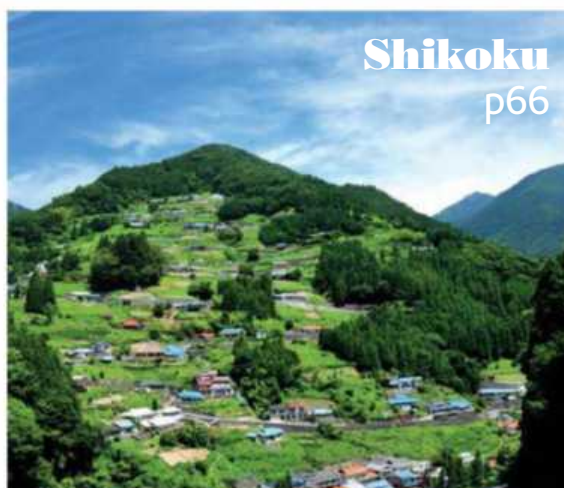




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Look for these symbols to quickly identify listings

Sights	Tours	Drinking
Beaches	Festivals	Entertainment
Activities	Sleeping	Shopping
Courses	Eating	Information & Transport

All prices correct at time of going to press. Prices for hotel rooms are for double, en suite rooms with breakfast in low season, unless otherwise stated. Flight prices are for the cheapest return fares, including one piece of hold baggage, unless otherwise stated.

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## Behind the Scenes



### MATTA FAIR® 2015

Malaysia's premier travel extravaganza returned once again this past September at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) in Kuala Lumpur. The MATTA Fair® is a three-day consumers' travel fair that was held from 4 to 6 September. About 100,000 visitors from Malaysia, ASEAN and the rest of the world took this opportunity to discover new travelling destinations, learn about other countries' cultures and book future holidays and vacations at highly discounted rates generously given by tour agencies and more.

During the fair, visitors were also entertained by live indigenous cultural performances and live multi-national cultural performances, including a guest appearance by Gary, the famous Korean hip-hop artiste and member of the popular Korean variety show, Running Man. There were also buyers' contests, redemptions and promotions that added to the carnival-like atmosphere.

The escape! team set up a booth where visitors of MATTA Fair could win attractive prizes. Games like 'Guess the Destination' were a head scratcher to players as they battled to get the highest score to win a stay at Bukit Gambang Resort City. There were also opportunities to spin a lucky draw wheel with every purchase or subscription to our magazines, where they could win a hotel stay at Bukit Gambang Resort City, Bukit Gambang Safari Park tickets, Sunway Putra Hotel and F&B vouchers, Lonely Planet Travel Journal and many more prizes. There was also a contest where every visitor

who made a purchase could take a photo and stand a chance to win a piece of travel luggage.

escape!  
would like to thank the following companies for their generous sponsorship:  
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COMING NEXT MONTH

# Lonely Planet's **Best in Travel 2016**

Our top **travel recommendations** for the year ahead, covering the best regions, countries and cities to visit

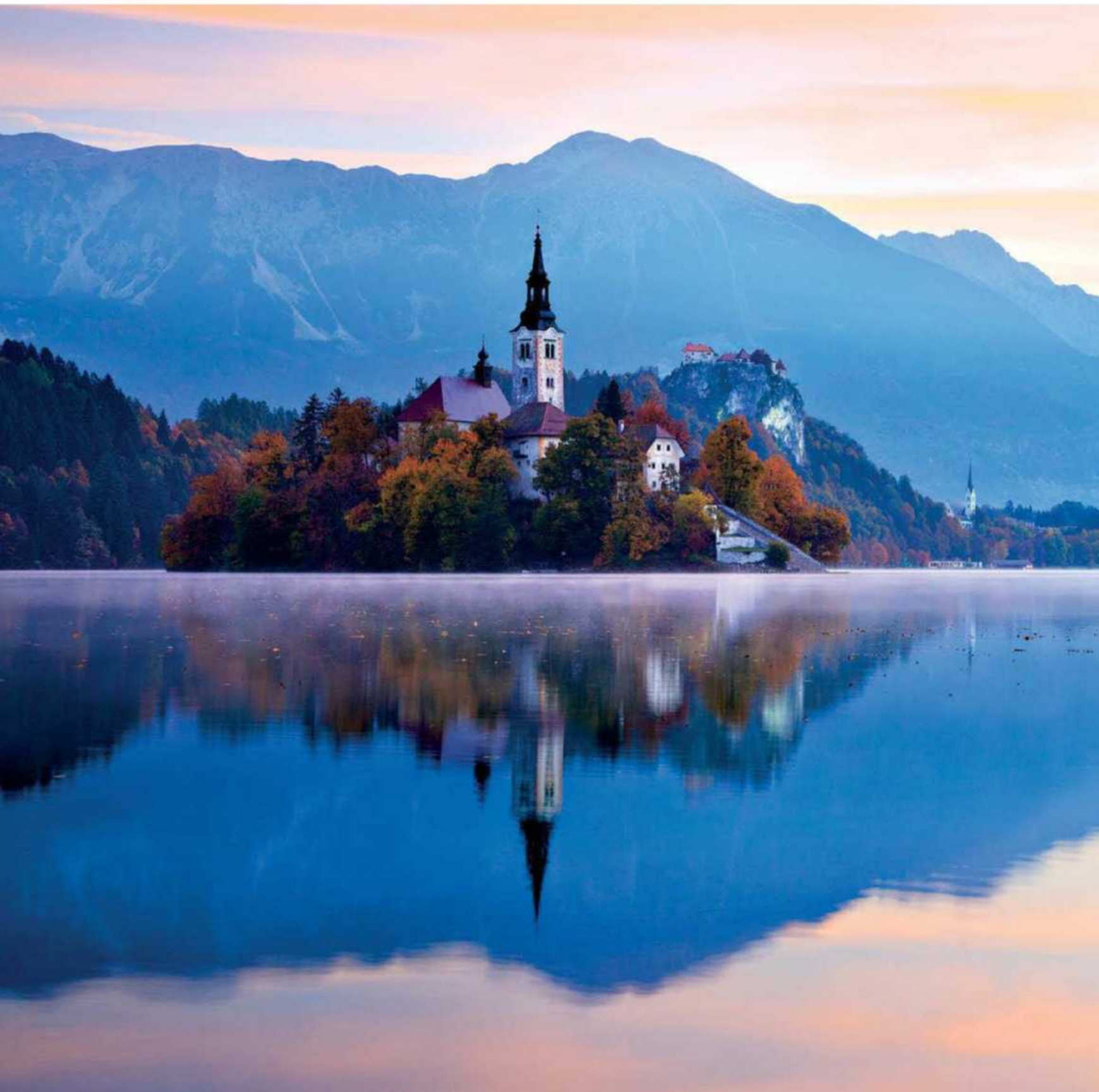
## **PLUS**

- Ride the Grand Train Tour on an epic rail journey across **Switzerland**
- Go on an unforgettable journey across northern **Thailand**



# Postcards

WHERE YOU'VE BEEN AND WHAT YOU'VE SEEN





Send your pictures and tell us the stories behind them:  
email [lpmagazine@regentmedia.sg](mailto:lpmagazine@regentmedia.sg)

The pilgrimage church on Bled Island was built in the late 17th century and features 15th-century Gothic frescoes

## LAKE BLEĐ, SLOVENIA

### Spire to inspire

I'd been looking forward to visiting the Church of the Assumption on Lake Bled since the first day of my holiday. I'd seen so many views of the church, sitting in splendid isolation in the middle of the lake, that I couldn't wait to head out, fingers crossed that the weather would cooperate, to see what I could capture. I arrived early and set off from the opposite shoreline with the tempting vision of the church lights in the distance. Gradually the sun rose and then a few magic moments came together – beautiful colours, perfect reflections and a wonderful dawn sky. I was so glad that it lived up to all my expectations.



**Stephen Price** is a civil engineer living and working in Sheffield



## AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

### To dye for

I visited Keukenhof with an old school friend who lives in Sweden and who I had not seen in three years. We had always wanted to visit a beautiful flower garden together. This photo of a rainbow rose was shot in the Oranje Nassau Pavilion within the gardens. I love the flower's many vivid colours. I could barely comprehend how beautiful Keukenhof was. It is the most breath-taking garden I have ever been to in my life!



**Ling Wei Ng** spent three days in Amsterdam, travelling from London



Rainbow roses are created through an elaborate process of absorbing coloured dyes through the stem of a white rose



This house overlooks Campo San Bartolomeo, and a statue of the 18th-century Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni

## VENICE, ITALY

### In the pink

Our arrival in Venice was subdued by two days of rain, but on the third day we were bathed in glorious sunshine and decided to explore the alleys between St Mark's Square and the Rialto Bridge. We reached a lovely square with beautiful buildings. This one grabbed my attention because of its colour. I noticed the man looking out of the window, serenely watching the world go by. I thought how wonderful his view must be from up there. Once I had taken the photo, the man looked at me and smiled.



**Rob Folkes** was in Venice with his wife to celebrate her birthday



## HOLGUÍN, CUBA Old school

During our road trip in Cuba my fiancé and I decided to spend a few days in Holguín, to see a proper working city. Once there, we met friendly people, ate the best seafood (especially octopus and prawns) and enjoyed spending time in a place that sees little or no tourism. This is my favourite shot from the holiday. A group of school pupils was walking down the road whilst a vintage car turned at the junction. I switched on my camera and managed to snap a shot at the perfect moment.



**Filippo Mazzoni** is Italian and lives in Aberdeen – his next trip is to Peru



Education, school meals and uniforms are free to all in Cuba – dance, gardening and Marxist ideology are widely taught



## INLE LAKE, BURMA Open arms

After an idyllic day on Inle Lake discovering a very different way of life, I visited Phaung Daw Oo Pagoda, which is the holiest religious site in southern Shan State. I saw many young monks with their families and, having just missed a shot of one of them with his teddy bear, I made sure that I was ready with my camera. Luckily, these two floated by with their lollipops and smiles. The photograph reminds me of the warm and playful nature of the people, as well as their resilience and hope.



**Claire Tomkins** spent two weeks in Burma and hopes to go to Iran next

Despite their diverse ethnicities, most of the 70,000-odd people who live around Inle Lake are devout Buddhists



# Globetrotter

A WORLD OF TRAVEL NEWS AND DISCOVERIES

## THE ATLAS OF BEAUTY

This photographic project by Romanian Mihaela Noroc aims to capture the global diversity of female beauty – the 29-year-old has visited 37 countries so far, and is in the midst of completing her journey. She hopes to publish a book, and is seeking crowdfunding support; find out more at [theatlasofbeauty.com](http://theatlasofbeauty.com).



SNAPSHOTS OF BEAUTY IN (1) SHIRAZ, IRAN; (2) THE AMAZON RAINFOREST, ECUADOR; (3) UZBEKISTAN; (4) SAN FRANCISCO, USA; (5) ECUADOR; (6) CHINA'S TIBETAN PLATEAU; (7) COLCA VALLEY, PERU; (8) OMO VALLEY, ETHIOPIA; (9) MARAMUREȘ, ROMANIA





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## 9 to 28

### HONG KONG PULSE 3D LIGHT SHOW

Hong Kong: This December, the iconic buildings of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Clock Tower at Tsim Sha Tsui turn into canvases for a visually mesmerising light show at this year's WinterFest. The magical 3D light show will excite visitors with its extraordinary displays of Christmas-themed audiovisual effects to put everyone in a cheery, festive mood.

● [www.discoverhongkong.com](http://www.discoverhongkong.com)

## November 2015

15

### LONGINES SINGAPORE GOLD CUP

Singapore: The highly anticipated event returns for its sixth run this year at the Singapore Racecourse where world-renowned jockeys vie for a prize purse of S\$1.35 million.

● [www.goldcup.sg](http://www.goldcup.sg)

21 TO 22

### SURIN ELEPHANT ROUND-UP

Surin, Thailand: Join 300 domesticated elephants as they indulge in a feast, play football with one another and even re-enact a play.

● [www.event-carnival.com/thailand](http://www.event-carnival.com/thailand)

19 TO 25

### PUSHKAR CAMEL FAIR

Pushkar, India: Prepare your senses for this whirlwind of a festival, which gathers nomadic desert traders alongside their camels and other animals.

● [www.pushkarcamelfair.com](http://www.pushkarcamelfair.com)

24

### BON OM TOUK

Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Hailed as the country's largest traditional event, the festival marks the reversal of the current in the Tonle Sap river with over 400 boats participating.

● [www.tourismcambodia.com](http://www.tourismcambodia.com)

20 TO 22

### MARGARET RIVER GOURMET ESCAPE

Margaret River, Australia: Hobnob with the 'godfather of modern cooking', Marco Pierre White, and other famed chefs such as Australian Masterchef judge Matt Moran.

● [www.gourmetescape.com.au](http://www.gourmetescape.com.au)

27 TO 29

### GEORGE TOWN LITERARY FESTIVAL

Penang, Malaysia: The festival features 30 writers from all over the world participating in panel discussions dealing with issues such as food writing and funding for independent writers.

● [www.georgetownlitfest.com](http://www.georgetownlitfest.com)

## December 2015

2

### PAGERWESI

Bali, Indonesia: Loosely translated, Pagerwesi means, "iron fence" and it is a day of strengthening fortifications against evil for the Balinese Hindus. Devotees erect elaborately decorated penjors (bamboo poles) as offerings to Sanghyang Paramesti Guru, the god who wiped out evil in the world.

Ritual processions are often carried out to protect the living and the dead. Many will also head to the temples to meditate on removing negative energy.

● [www.balitourismboard.org](http://www.balitourismboard.org)

9 TO 16

### DUBAI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Dubai, UAE: Now in its 12th year, the Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF) has anchored itself as a leading influential platform for Arab filmmakers looking to showcase their work at an international level.

● [dubaifilmfest.com](http://dubaifilmfest.com)

19

### GIANT LANTERN FESTIVAL

San Fernando, Philippines: For the past 106 years, residents of this small cottage community have crafted beautiful, intricately wired *parul* – giant, star-shaped lanterns – to symbolise hope within the Christian community.

● [giantlantern.ph](http://giantlantern.ph)

17 TO 19

### HAGOITA-ICHI

Tokyo, Japan: Repel bad luck and start the New Year on a clean slate by purchasing a *hagoita* at the annual Hagoita-Ichi (Battledore Fair), held near the main hall of Senso-ji Temple.

● [www.jnto.go.jp](http://www.jnto.go.jp)

29 TO 31

### RHYTHM AND VINES

Gisborne, New Zealand: Join thousands in counting down to 2016 at the three-day long festival with musical acts such as Mac Miller, Angus & Julia Stone and many more.

● [rhythmandvines.co.nz](http://rhythmandvines.co.nz)



## TRAVEL MUST-HAVES

Music player and a pair of good headphones – Gabriel

Lip balm – Field

A good jacket – Jude

Nail clipper – Martin

A fresh pair of boxers for every day – KC

## On the road with Caracal

Credited for cementing Singapore's position in the international music scene with their electrifying stage presence and post-hardcore rock, KC (vocals), Field (guitar), Jude (bass), Gabriel (guitar) and Martin (drums) have garnered screaming fans from cities all across the globe, including New York, Tokyo, Toronto and Taiwan. We catch up with the candidly cheeky and endearingly humble members of this world-class band to get them to dish the dirt on what really goes on off stage – when they aren't too busy signing autographs, that is.

**We're still surprised at the reach of our music.**

One fan drove over 6 hours to see us in Toronto, and when we were in New York, we wanted to gift some of our merchandise to this band called The Ongoing Concept, and the bassist mentioned that he'd seen our album before!

**We immerse ourselves in every city we visit.** Just go full force, and see and eat as much as possible. KC has eaten scorpion in Beijing, and Jude has tried balut in the Philippines.

**The worst thing that happened to us on the streets of New York** was getting challenged to a breakdance battle – the city is much less dangerous and notorious than it's been made out to be.

**Japan and Toronto are two cities that we would consider living in**, and for very different reasons. Toronto is very chill, and Tokyo is the epitome of organised chaos – efficient and clean.

**Martin is a cuddler, and Field kicks in his sleep**, and while Martin is the percussionist in the group, Field is the one who makes the most noise, even when he's brushing his teeth.

**Gabriel has the most baggage**, but most of it is gear. Otherwise, everyone travels very light. Field once fit a week's worth of clothing into a single backpack.

**A fully stocked Japanese vending machine**, a hammock, and a machine gun that shoots flares are some of the things we would want if we were stranded on a desert island.



Caracal is set to headline the upcoming **Skechers Sundown Festival 2015** on **21 November**. Other international acts include Korea's Epik High, Thailand's Potato and Japan's INKT. Tickets start at S\$88; visit [sundownfestival.sg](http://sundownfestival.sg) for more information.

‘Getting to play on the same stage as other huge Asian artistes really shows how far the Asian music industry has grown over the years, and we’re stoked to be part of that growth.’

PHOTOGRAPHS: MELVIN ONG

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# Spotted


SIGHTINGS BY OUR WRITERS  
FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



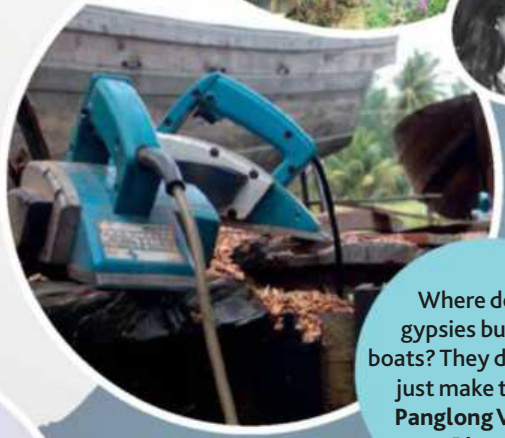
Autumn  
is  
perfect weather  
for trekking up  
Mt. Santis,  
Switzerland!



Get up close and  
personal with these  
masculine creatures in  
Chiang Mai, Thailand




It smelt really  
good standing there  
at the Lavender  
Cottage in Taichung,  
Taiwan



Where do sea  
gypsies buy their  
boats? They don't, they  
just make them in  
Panglong Village,  
Bintan



A gut-busting  
400-step climb up  
a cliff in Ha Long  
Bay, Vietnam will  
earn you this  
reward



A second-  
generation potter  
in Tohoku, Japan  
'sketched' this in a  
matter of  
seconds



## NEW EATS



Slow food has just been given the fast track – **Grain Traders** is on a mission

to serve up hearty, healthy, and flavourful bowls in a chic, casual setting, with ingredients that are wholesome and skilfully prepared.

Expect to find techniques such as sous

vide, roasting, grilling, and baking in its selection of grains, proteins, and sides. Tailor your own bowl, or pick from their selection of signatures such as The Tantrum, a vegetarian selection of lentil cakes and roasted beetroot, or the wasabi-salmon based Upstream.

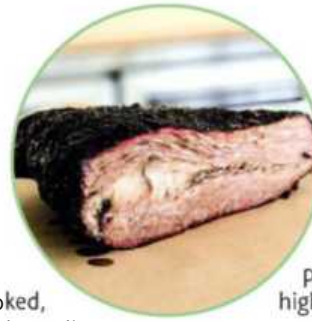
● 138 Market St, #01-01/02/03; grain-traders.com



With award-winning Executive Chef Drew Nocente at the helm, **5th Quarter** promises a unique dining experience at its stylish locale within the spanking new Hotel Vagabond. Nocente's Italian heritage sees him presenting an array of meats that have been 'Salted & Hung', 'Fermented, Fried, Braised', 'Smoked, Brined, Cured', 'Grilled, Seared, Charred', 'Roasted & Green', 'Frozen, Churned, Baked'.

In addition to the house-made Salami, Lardo, Coppa, Pancetta and Guanciale, other interesting menu items include the Salt 'n' Pepper Tripe, Pork Collar with Radishes & Praline, and Chocolate Salami with Salted Caramel Ice Cream.

● 39 Syed Alwi Road; Tel: +65 6291-1936



A bastion of the American smoked-meats culture in the middle of a quintessentially Singaporean neighbourhood, **Red Eye Smokehouse** strongly believes in responsibly sourced premium produce and small-batch high-quality cooking.

Unpretentiously chic and irresistibly mouth-watering, everything from the pickles and the Southern-inspired sides to the secret dry rubs are made in-house. While the US Angus Beef Brisket and smoked Sriracha Wings are staples on the menu (and our favourites), expect special cuts such as pork belly and lamb shank to pop up occasionally, all of which have been given the same 10-hour smoke treatment to flavourful, fork-tender effect.

● 1 Cavan Road; Tel: +65 6291-0218

## NEW HOTEL

If you've ever fancied staying in an art gallery, the luxury boutique Apricot Hotel is the answer to your prayers. Perched on the corner of Hanoi's Old Quarter and set across from the iconic Hoan Kiem Lake, this stylish new hotel houses a carefully curated collection of Vietnamese paintings and sculptures to showcase the very best in traditional and contemporary local art (from US\$110pp; apricothotels.com).





# A Private Oasis in Bali

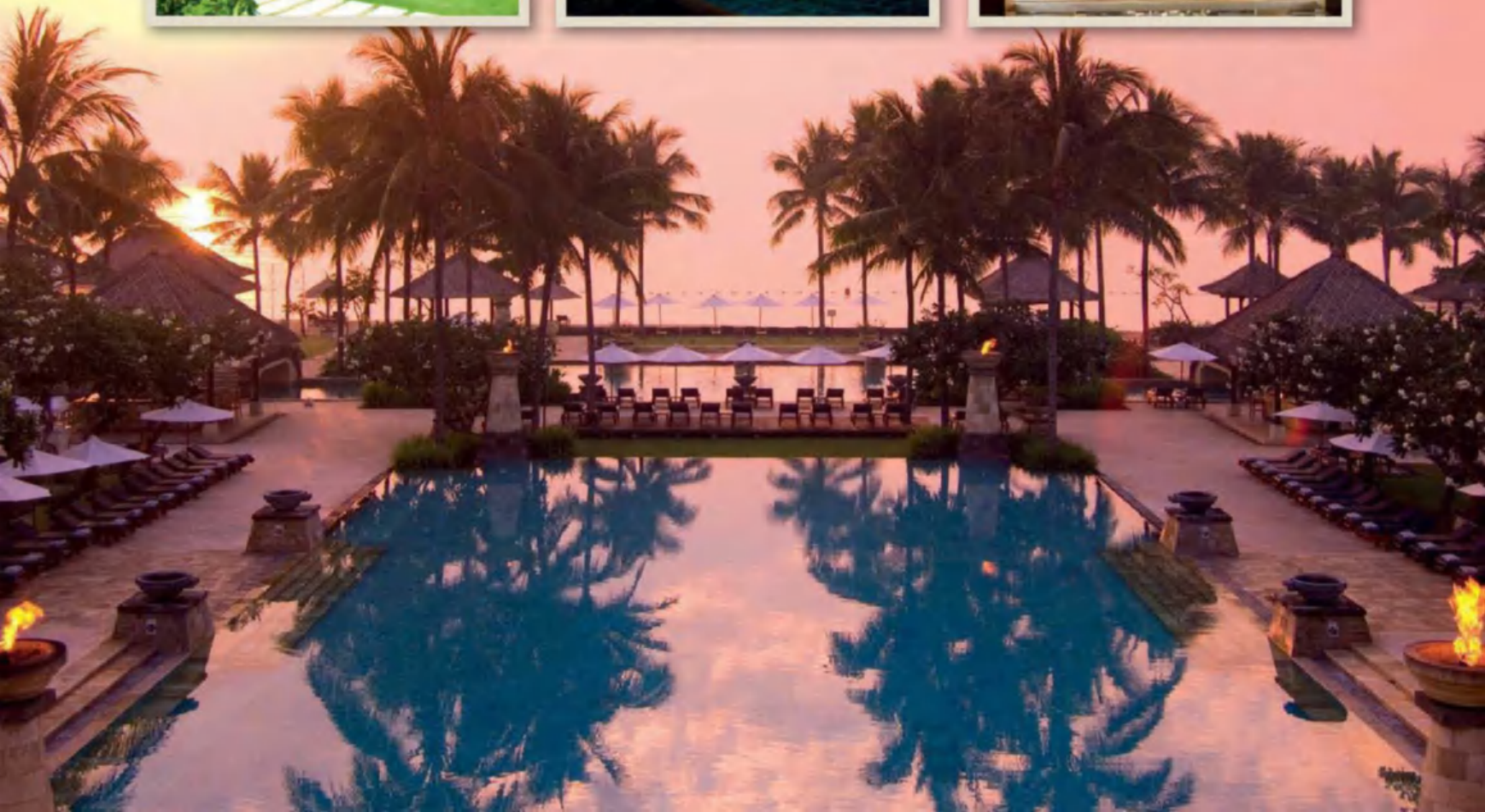
Right on the edge of the Indian Ocean is the award-winning **Conrad Bali**. The beachfront property features frangipani-perfumed gardens and cascading waterfalls. It is also the venue for the exquisite, floating Infinity Chapel with marble runway – the perfect place to exchange vows with a view of the ocean in the background.

The resort itself is split into two different areas and guests can choose to stay at the beautifully appointed guest rooms in the main wing, or opt for the exclusive Conrad Suites wing that offers a separate private infinity pool, lounge and entrance. And true to every Conrad hotel luxury experience, a complimentary pillow menu is available to all guests.

For guests who arrive early or are departing late, relax at the Reflection Lounge, a thoughtful service provided by Conrad Bali. Freshen up with a shower at the lounge and snack on cookies, coffee and tea while you wait. The complimentary Wi-Fi makes it convenient to check up on emails. Guests are also welcome to enjoy the rest of the resort's facilities, such as dining at the resort's restaurants and bars, taking a dip in the pool or enjoying a body rejuvenating massage at Jiwa Spa.

Go beyond the comforts of the hotel by engaging in the resort's cultural immersion activities. Take a trip to the southern coast of Bali and be mesmerised by the majestic temples of Uluwatu, or indulge in souvenir shopping along Seminyak.

● [www.conradbali.com](http://www.conradbali.com)





# RYOKAN REVIVAL

Traditional Japanese inns, or *ryokan*, are fast gaining popularity as travellers seek out bona fide experiences unmarred by the same cookie-cutter mould of commercialisation. Today, *ryokan* offer more than just tatami-matted rooms, traditional yukata, and multi-course kaiseki; these days, it isn't uncommon to see Japanese folk art classes on the itinerary.



## Ryokan Kurashiki

In the centre of the Bikan Historical Quarter in Okayama Prefecture lays Ryokan Kurashiki. It once belonged to a wealthy sugar merchant who filled the house with exquisite antiques that displayed fine Japanese craftsmanship. Allow the Okami (landlady) to showcase the warm, welcoming spirit of *omotenashi* – timeless Japanese hospitality – in the traditionally outfitted rooms.

● [www.ryokan-kurashiki.jp/en](http://www.ryokan-kurashiki.jp/en)

## Kifu No Sato

This fourth-generation run ryokan in Okayama Prefecture provides guests with a connection to nature as founder Sasaki Takeshi's passion for flowers is reflected in the dozens of expertly pruned ikebana – Japanese floral arrangements – that grace the halls and rooms, as well as in the details of the ryokan that expresses the beauty of flowers and the passing of the seasons.

● [kifunosato-ryokan.com](http://kifunosato-ryokan.com)



## Nakanobo Zuien

For more than a thousand years, Arima in Kyoto Prefecture has been the choice location for a weekend getaway for residents in the Kansai region. Famed for its mineral-rich onsen (hot spring), locals flock to nearby ryokan such as Nakanobo Zuien for a weekend of rejuvenation. This ryokan has been entertaining guests for 150 years with their highly personalised services and open-air onsen.

● [www.zuien.jp/english](http://www.zuien.jp/english)

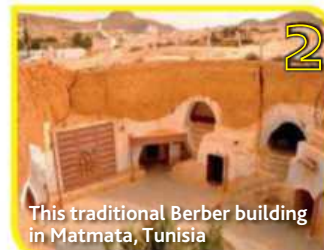


## MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

Top-ranking out-of-this-world locations to visit in anticipation of *Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens*



LEGOLANDs around the world have re-created iconic *Star Wars* scenes



This traditional Berber building in Matmata, Tunisia



The man-made craters of Chott el Djerid, Tunisia

(full listing at [goeuro.com/star-wars-filming-locations](http://goeuro.com/star-wars-filming-locations))

We're not too sure about these designs from the Irregular Choice *Star Wars* collection, but die-hard fans may find these collectible pieces... intriguing.





# What's in our bag



Shiseido  
Ultimune Power  
Infusing Eye  
Concentrate

Sony NW-A26HN  
Walkman® and MDR-  
EX750NA h.ear in NCT™  
headphones



Lanvin printed notebook  
and Caran d'Ache printed  
acetate ballpoint pen



As the holiday season draws  
near and more of you are  
jetting off for a well-deserved  
year-end break, remember to  
pack on these beauty and  
travel essentials to combat the  
cold weather in style



Apple iPhone 6S  
in Rose Gold



Kiehl's x Peter  
Max Limited  
Edition Richly  
Hydrating  
Hand Cream  
in lavender



SK-II R.N.A.  
Power Essence



M.A.C Enchanted Eye lip  
and eye bag in copper



Balenciaga leather backpack

Olympus OM-D E-M5 Mark II





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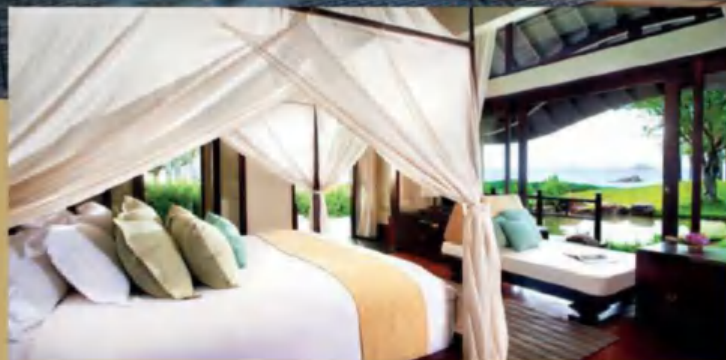
*Superior Product Performance*

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BUSINESS  
IN MALAYSIA**





# Natural Healing in the heart of Krabi



personal with residential baby elephant, Koko, who grew up in a nearby elephant camp and occasionally pops by the peaceful resort to spend time with in-house guests. The resort itself is a place of tranquillity and guests can make use of the quiet atmosphere by booking a candlelight yoga session. Spa treatments are also available to further relax guests; Phulay Bay Spa offers a menu of Thai and Asian treatments in their bamboo-lined haven.

● [www.phulay-bay.com](http://www.phulay-bay.com)

**Escape to Phulay Bay, a luxurious wellness resort that will revitalise travellers with their array of bespoke services.** Set ashore the Andaman Sea, Phulay Bay offers uninterrupted views of the naturally rugged shoreline and dramatic limestone karsts alongside the rainforest, beach and waterfalls.

This paradisiacal resort houses 54 one-bedroom villas, each with its own elegant pavilion facing the lush, tropical gardens, or the cerulean blue seas, private veranda with lounge beds and an intimate outdoor bath.

Peckish guests can head on a culinary adventure inspired by flavours of the world in one of the many fine restaurants located within the resort. Savour authentic traditional Thai cuisine at Sri Tang or opt for the seafood-rich flavours of Mediterranean inspired fare at Jampoon. For a healthier option, Raw Bar makes use of home grown, organic produce in their light and refreshing cuisine.

Exploring the rest of the resort will bring guests up close and





# Easy Trips



*including*

- ▶ Join thousands of people making kimchi in Seoul, South Korea
- ▶ Pay respects to the water spirits at Loy Krathong in Chiangmai, Thailand
- ▶ Move to the beat at one of the region's biggest EDM festivals in Goa, India
- ▶ Join in the flag off of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race in Sydney, Australia
- ▶ Tee off on the oldest golf course in Australia in Tasmania, Australia

WORDS: RAEWYN KOH. PHOTOGRAPH: SUNBURN FESTIVAL





Get hands on in one of the largest food festivals in the region

## Seoul Kimchi Making & Sharing Festival

Early winter is the season where families gather together to prepare Korea's most iconic side dish – kimchi. Kimjang, the process of making kimchi in the wintertime, was recently granted the prestigious honour of being a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in December 2013. In celebration of this, the Seoul government hosted this festival to ensure this integral part of Korean heritage and culture can be preserved and shared with the world through the Seoul Kimchi Making & Sharing Festival.

Over the course of three days, thousands of volunteers will gather at Gwanghwamun Square

to prepare Baechu Kimchi (whole cabbage kimchi), the most well known type of kimchi. The tonnes of kimchi made are then crated off to charities to be consumed for the year until the next kimjang. Spectators can watch the mesmerising sight of thousands making kimchi side-by-side and even get to taste fresh samples of kimchi during the engaging event.

On other days, walk through the informative exhibitions that showcase the history and health benefits of kimchi, or participate in the arduous but rewarding task of making your own batch of kimchi with the many kimchi

making classes available. For those who just want to eat, Cheonggye Plaza will have booths

set up where visitors are invited to try the many different kimchi types made by specific provinces.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ The Seoul Kimchi Making & Sharing Festival will have its second run from 6 to 8 December, and will be held in various locations: Seoul Square, Cheonggye Plaza, Sejongno Park, Taepyeongno and at Gwanghwamun Square where the main mass kimchi making event will take place. Register for kimchi making classes at [seoulkimchifestival.com](http://seoulkimchifestival.com).

❷ The official carrier for South

Korea, Korean Air, flies from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur directly to Incheon Airport daily.

❸ Stay at The Westin Chosun Seoul, a centrally located hotel that is in close proximity to the festival's event space, as well as the comprehensive subway system. The five-star accommodation holds 462 spacious guest rooms fitted with modern luxury amenities (from US\$273; [westinchosun.co.kr](http://westinchosun.co.kr)).

PHOTOGRAPHS: REPUBLIC OF KOREA



## Loy Krathong & Yee Peng

Loy Krathong (Festival of Lights) is an annual religious event that is celebrated all over Thailand but done more elaborately in the northern state, Chiang Mai. Loosely translated, Loy Krathong means, "to float a basket". Buddhist devotees often craft Krathong (miniature rafts) out of banana leaves or bread, and adorn them with flowers, candles and incense sticks. On the day of the full moon, the Krathong are launched into the Ping River with Buddhists making a wish and paying respects to the water spirits that guard the river.

In Chiang Mai, Loy Krathong coincides with the Lanna (Northern Thailand) festival of Yee Peng, or Full Moon Day of the second Lanna lunar calendar. In this festival, lighted Khom Loi (floating lanterns) are released through the course of the night. It is believed that releasing Khom Loi is a form of worship to Buddha that also takes away a person's misfortune.

The main celebrations of Loy Krathong take place on the second day of celebrations but for a view worth capturing on camera, head to the Lanna Dhutanka grounds

behind Mae Jo University for the mass release of Khom Loi. Watch or participate in letting go of these paper and bamboo lanterns that will beautifully illuminate the night sky.

Before making your way down to the Ping River, enjoy the slightly cooler winter air with a scenic bike ride around the moated Old City of Chiang Mai. Chiang Mai Biking does 4-hour to half-day tours to various parts of Chiang Mai with stops by places of rich cultural significance. Book now at [chiangmaibiking.com](http://chiangmaibiking.com).

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ The first day of Loy Krathong & Yee Peng falls on 24 November, with the main celebrations on 25 continuing on to 26.

❷ There are daily flights from either Silkair or Tigerair that fly from Singapore to Chiang Mai directly. From Kuala Lumpur, AirAsia flies daily to Chiang Mai directly.

✉ Expectantly, hotels in Chiang Mai get snapped up quickly during this festive period by other travellers. Try to stay near the Ta Phae Gate as this is where the last day's celebrations will take place.



2

Receive blessings when you pay your respects to the water spirits at Loy Krathong



Move to the rhythm of your heart at one of the region's largest EDM festivals

## Sunburn Festival

Make "eat, sleep, rave, repeat" your mantra at Sunburn Festival this year. Now in its ninth year, Sunburn Festival continues to reign as one of the biggest electronic dance music (EDM) festivals in the region. Round off the year with the perfect soundtrack as Dutch sensation, and the world's number 4 DJ, Martin Garrix headlines the four-day event.

Look out for the new separate stages by Spinnin' and Revealed Recordings, two of the biggest record labels in the EDM industry. The Spinnin' Sessions stage will showcase some of their more popular artists, while Dutch DJ/Producer Dyro will be headlining the Revealed Recordings stage. Making his Asian debut at Sunburn Festival will be up and coming American-Indian DJ/Producer KSHMR. Apart from the raving beats, Sunburn Festival will also entertain ravers with a range of adrenaline sports, such as bungee jumping, zorbing and more.

It is worth checking Goa out before the big year-end rave party. The coastal state was a Portuguese outpost for almost 500 years and the influences of its past colonial rule can still be seen in its architecture and cuisine. Goa has maintained an easy going languidness that attracts crowds of Indians from other states to drop by

for a quick beach holiday within the country. But apart from the usual mine of beach and water sport activities, Goa is one of the top places in India for Ayurveda treatments, a 5,000-year-old method of natural healing that originated in India. Devaaya on Divar Island, near Panaji (Goa's capital) offers stays at their resort with access to various Ayurvedic and Naturopathy treatments, as well as yoga classes suitable for different skill levels ([devaaya.com](http://devaaya.com)).

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ Sunburn Festival runs from 27 to 30 December this year. Check out the list of acts playing at [sunburn.in](http://sunburn.in) and book tickets at [via.gg/pg1](http://via.gg/pg1).

❷ Fly in from Singapore or Kuala Lumpur via Mumbai on Air India to get to the Goa International Airport. From here, board a pre-paid taxi for a 1.5-hour ride to Vagator, where the festival is held.

✉ Head to Ozran Heights Beach Resort for beachfront properties just next to the festival grounds. The homely appointed private cottages face uninterrupted views of the Arabian Sea (from US\$232; [ozranheights.com](http://ozranheights.com)).





Celebrate summer at one of the most prestigious yacht races in the Australia

## Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race

The past 70 years has seen hordes of spectators gather in Australia's summer heat to watch the flag off of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Considered one of the most difficult yacht courses in the world, the 630-nautical mile race will see top yachters from around the world sail out from Sydney Harbour, down towards the south-east coast of mainland Australia, crossing the Bass Strait before cruising down the east coast of Tasmania before finally docking at the historic port city of Hobart.

The first day of the race is considered one of the most exciting, with many Sydney-siders making a day of it by picnicking near the starting cannon fires. Those with their own boats will also sail out to be with the fleet for the start of the race.

The unpredictable weather conditions and current movements on the water make for a nail biting event that can last anywhere from one to four days. Race watchers often make their way to Tasmania in the middle of the race in anticipation of the first yachts to make it pass the finishing line. There, the yachts are welcomed with cheers and a champagne bottle popping

ceremony before results are announced.

After the excitement of the flag off, explore the picturesque harbour of Sydney with a walking tour. City Walking Tours offers six different tours that show the best of modern Sydney, as well as the historical, tracing back to the state's aboriginal beginnings ([citywalkingtours.com.au](http://citywalkingtours.com.au)).

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ The Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race takes place on 26 December every year. It is advisable to head to the harbour early in the morning as it will be crowded. Or, join in the fun on the water with the CYCA official spectator vessels. Prices start at USD\$88 per person and includes wine, beer and light canapés ([rolexsydneyhobart.com](http://rolexsydneyhobart.com)).

❷ National carriers Singapore Airlines and Malaysia Airlines fly from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur respectively to Sydney Airport daily.

❸ Catch the action from the comfort of your own hotel at the Four Seasons Sydney. Opt for the Deluxe City Harbour Room that faces the Sydney Harbour and partial views of the Sydney Opera House (from USD\$357 per night; [fourseasons.com/sydney](http://fourseasons.com/sydney)).

## Golfing getaways in Tasmania, Australia

Off the great island-continent of Australia is the southern state of Tasmania – beautifully wild with nature taking reign of the land. Its all-year cool climate has pushed Tasmania into the spotlight for its wineries that produce crisp pinot noirs and sparkling wines. These wines are then spectacularly paired with Tasmanian cuisine known for its use of organic, local produce and rustic from-farm-to-table preparation that leaves diners with a warm sense of contentment at the end of a meal.

As the year comes to a close, however, the apex of southern-hemisphere summer should be enjoyed on the dramatic undulating golf courses in Tasmania. The 'Island of Inspiration' was recently named 'Undiscovered Golf Destination of the Year' by more than 200 of the world's leading golf travel journalists across 36 countries at the International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO).

There are close to 70 golf courses across the state, many of which feature challenging courses that face stunning backdrops of the Pacific Ocean in the background. Tasmania sets out to be a world-class destination for professional and amateur golfing and recently opened the Cape Wickham Golf Course on King Island. Considered one of the most scenic courses in

Tasmania, all 18 holes feature panoramic views of the Bass Strait at every tee-off. Tasmania's other draw as a golfing destination is also its Ratho Links Course, the oldest course in Australia that was built in 1822 by Scottish immigrants. In recent years, its lakes and rivers have been known to be a top trout fishing spot.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

❶ For those heading to Ratho Links Course, Qantas Airways flies from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Hobart International Airport with one layover in Melbourne. To get to King Island for the Cape Wickham Golf Course, fly Regional Express from the Tullamarine Airport.

❷ Ratho Links Course doesn't require reservations in advance and accepts walk-ins. It costs USD\$26 per person for an 18-hole round. Consider staying on the farm itself to explore the newly restored buildings and boutique rooms, as well as enjoy a spot of sunrise fishing on the lakes ([rathofarm.com](http://rathofarm.com)).

❸ Cape Wickham Golf Course allows bookings per game or per day should golfers want to explore the private Victoria Cove area it is situated on (from USD\$110; [capewickham.com.au](http://capewickham.com.au)).



Fresh air and great landscapes come together to make Tasmania a premier golfing destination

PHOTOGRAPHS: ©ROLEX/DANIEL FORSTER, CAPE WICKHAM



# Welcome To Paradise

South East Asia's first Global Geopark is also one of the finest eco-destination islands in the Andaman Sea

**G**ranted Geopark status by UNESCO in 2007, Langkawi is the ideal island destination for travellers seeking to shake off city-slicker stresses and embrace nature amidst the clear blue waters of the Andaman Sea. Rich in legends, myths and folklores and offering unique landscapes, beautiful wildlife and heritage value, Langkawi also believes in promoting environmental and social sustainability with their eco-friendly initiatives that preserve the integrity of Langkawi's unique identity.

## Stony Hedge

The most significant asset of Machinchang Cambrian Geoforest Park is 701 metres up Mount Machinchang on the north-western part of the island overlooking tropical rainforests and an extraordinarily diverse landscape of rock collections with stunning vertical cliffs. The fifteen-minute cable car ride at 42-degree gradient will bring you to a two-tier wooden platform at the Top Station for a majestic bird's-eye view.

## Hole in the Wall

Equally fascinating on the north-eastern coast is the Kilim Karst Geoforest Park; cruising from



and estuary with its extensive mangrove forests and waterways is a great place for bird-spotting, including the ubiquitous Brahminy Kites and sea

Kilim Jetty, sculpted gray limestone walls abundantly lush with mangroves flank Sungai Kilim all the way to the open Andaman Sea. The Kilim River

eagles sweeping in graceful arcs across the sky. Otters, monitor lizards, macaques, dusky langurs, and many other animals also inhabit this species-rich intertidal region.



## Marble delight

The Dayang Bunting Marble Geoforest Park covers Langkawi's second largest island, Pulau Dayang Bunting, and several adjacent islands. Situated just south of the main island, the park encompasses 44 sq km and is famous for its fresh water lake nestled amongst hills of rugged forest. Its incredible diversity of rock formations – Triassic, Ordovician, Middle Devonian and Permian – form a veritable geological tapestry unfolding across the land, its graphical delineation drawing a map through the eons.



## NATURALLY PANORAMIC

Enjoy a thrilling ride on the Langkawi SkyCab to the Sky Bridge at the Machinchang Cambrian Geoforest Park where nature unveils a breathtaking panoramic vista of Langkawi's beauty.

At 2,300ft above sea level, the Langkawi Sky Bridge is the best location to observe the unique geological formations of the island and to capture that special moment you will cherish forever.

Langkawi, Naturally filled with Incredible memories.

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[www.naturallylangkawi.my](http://www.naturallylangkawi.my)

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Langkawi Sky Bridge



*City at a glance:*  
**SYDNEY**

The stunning harbour city of Sydney, Australia's largest metropolis, is a hotpot of culture, arts, history and gastronomy

WORDS TATYANA LEONOV ● PHOTOGRAPHS DESTINATION NSW



The Mistresses of Mayhem  
welcome you into the theatrical  
realm of QT Sydney

PHOTOGRAPH: QT SYDNEY





The Bay View Executive Suite at InterContinental Sydney Double Bay

**S**YDNEY IS NOT A CITY THAT can be confused with any other. Two iconic landmarks – the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Sydney Opera House – sit centrestage, enticing visitors from far and wide.

Circular Quay and The Rocks link the two landmarks, providing a good opportunity for a harbourside stroll with plenty of photo prospects along the way.

Of course, there's a lot more to Sydney if you scratch the surface and the population growth (Sydney's population is predicted to top five million shortly) demonstrates that it's not merely a popular spot to visit – but also to live. To put it in perspective, about one in five Australians reside in Sydney.

Mild winters and long balmy summers means this city doesn't hibernate! From the hipster inner-city hoods to the outlying suburbs, there's always a new exhibition, performance or recital rolling out the red carpet for opening night.

Barangaroo is the latest development on everybody lips. The \$6 million development of the precinct saw the opening of Barangaroo Reserve in August this year, with plans underway to extend to residential space, a new plush hotel and casino in 2016.

Another transformation, the \$3.4 billion makeover of Darling Harbour, is scheduled for completion 2016/2017. This will be the biggest change that the waterside precinct has seen in 25 years! Key developments include the construction of Australia's largest exhibition and convention centre and the opening of the five-star 600-room Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour. Furthermore, revamps of two other hotels in the vicinity will see a total of 820 new rooms in Darling Harbour by 2017.

Of course, there is no shortage of hotels to stay in currently and the offerings range

from lavish accommodations to historical hotels to quirky-cool stays.

The assortment of lodging options on offer is an echo of Sydney itself – diverse and distinctive. The diversity of the city stretches a lot further – from culture and cuisine to entertainment and everyday life. It's a well-known fact that Sydney is an incredibly multicultural metropolis (almost 40 percent of present-day Sydney residents were born outside of Australia) and diversity is both celebrated and endorsed.

An important part of Sydney's identity is, of course, its Indigenous history, and the Aboriginal tourism sector is designed to educate visitors about Australia's past. Dance and musical performances are a powerful channel used traditionally by Aboriginal people to pass on information (a popular spot to catch a casual street-side performance is at Circular Quay); informative tours offer attendees an insightful way to learn about Aboriginal peoples cultures (The Rocks Dreaming Aboriginal Heritage Tour is one if Sydney's most immersive offerings); and studying Indigenous art is an all-time favourite activity (The Yiribana Gallery at The Art Gallery of NSW is one of the largest spaces in the country dedicated to Indigenous artworks).

The newest creative space attracting anyone who's even a little bit in the know when it comes to arts is the Chippendale shopping and arts precinct. Just 10 minutes drive from the city centre, the trendy hub has a wide range of art, culture, cuisine and shopping attractions. Many of the shops and galleries are situated in chic

spaces inside former warehouses – a clever approach employed to repurpose space that would otherwise go unused.

It's a fitting representation of how Sydney goes about change. The pulsating city adapts and develops, always moving with the times. Sydney utilises what already exists and creates when needed. It's a reflection of the people that call Sydney home – pulled from all over the globe to call this city theirs. It's this synthesis of the physical, mental and spiritual that makes Sydney a great place to visit.



BBQ meats at Mr. Wong



The wharf at Q Station Sydney Harbour National Park Manly





### QT Sydney

Cool cats know to come to QT Sydney – Sydney's centrally located, eccentrically designed hotel, where every detail comes with a story. The hotel is a unification of two historical buildings – the State Theatre and department store Gowings – and the bold design plays on the historical aspect ramped up and transformed using innovative technology and novel art mediums. Two hundred rooms in 12 different design styles are spread out over the two buildings where pops of bright colour, beautiful materials and unusual collectables throughout create for a unique stay.

● [qtsydney.com.au](http://qtsydney.com.au)

### Q Station Sydney Harbour National Park Manly

Thirty-five minutes by ferry from Circular Quay lays the white sand of the famous Manly Beach – home to Q Station as it's fondly known. A night here offers guests the opportunity to get out of the city centre and stay in a one of Australia's most significant historical landmarks. The former quarantine station was the first site officially reserved as a place of quarantine for people entering Australia (migrants, convicts and crew members), and today is home to 82 suites, rooms and cottages spread out across 30 hectares of Sydney Harbour National Park. Wildlife sightings – both on land and in water – are common.

● [qstation.com.au](http://qstation.com.au)



## Hotels

### InterContinental Sydney Double Bay

Positioned in Sydney's exclusive suburb of Double Bay, InterContinental Sydney Double Bay is one of Sydney's newer hotel properties (it was opened November 2014) and the only five-star hotel located outside the city centre (Double Bay is five kilometres from the city centre). The 140 rooms and suites are wrapped around a beautiful French provincial courtyard making for a luxurious Paris-chic residential effect. The rooftop bar and lounge is popular on balmy nights with Sydney's fashionable crowd – so dress to impress.

● [ihg.com](http://ihg.com)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT  
QT Sydney Room; Q Station  
Sydney Harbour National  
Park Manly; the courtyard  
at InterContinental Sydney  
Double Bay; Fire Station  
Studio Balcony



### Cockatoo Island

For something a little bit different, luxury camping (or glamping as it's commonly known) at Cockatoo Island is a fun option. Explore the UNESCO World Heritage-listed site on arrival, enjoy a casual dinner al fresco, then wake up to a sunrise view of Sydney Harbour – it's a million-dollar vista for a minimal fee (camping prices start at AUD\$45 a night). If camping isn't your style there are a number of heritage houses and apartments available for rent on the island.

● [cockatooisland.gov.au](http://cockatooisland.gov.au)



PHOTOGRAPHS: QT SYDNEY; Q STATION SYDNEY HARBOUR NATIONAL PARK MANLY; INTERCONTINENTAL SYDNEY DOUBLE BAY; GEOFF MAGEE. COURTESY SYDNEY HARBOUR FEDERATION TRUST



### BridgeClimb Sydney

Repeatedly ranked as one of the most memorable Sydney experiences, BridgeClimb Sydney is a must-do. Visitors get the chance to get up close and personal with the Australian icon on the 3.5-hour classic climb, taking in stunning 360 degree panoramas of Sydney while the climb guide chats history and bridge construction. Reaching the summit is, of course, the highlight, especially around sunset (twilight climbs book out weeks in advance, so reserve ahead). For those short on time there are sampler and express options too.

● [bridgeclimb.com](http://bridgeclimb.com)



### Sydney Opera House

Internationally acclaimed as an architectural masterpiece, the Sydney Opera House with its shell-shaped white sails most certainly stands out. Designed by Denmark's Jørn Utzon, it took some time for the artistic structure to be completed because of disagreements about the modern design and several challenging engineering tasks. Commissioned in 1956, the Sydney Opera House was finally opened 17 years later in 1973. In 2007 it was inscribed in the World Heritage List. The interior should not be overlooked and the best way to soak up the atmosphere and architecture is by attending a performance (classical music, opera, theatre and ballet concerts are all on offer at various times throughout the year). An early morning backstage tour is a great option for visitors who want to learn about the construction and history with an expert guide.

● [sydneyoperahouse.com](http://sydneyoperahouse.com)



## Attractions



### Bondi Beach

No visit to Sydney is complete without a day out at Bondi Beach. Golden sand, waves dotted with pro surfers, shopping aplenty, and a dining and drinking scene that rivals the rest of Sydney, Bondi Beach is where the city meets the surf. Book a surf lesson, stroll along the promenade, then grab a café latte and watch the world swim by. When hunger comes calling Icebergs Dining Room and Bar is the go-to Bondi eatery – stunning views and tasty bites combine to capture that quintessential Bondi Beach experience.



### Barangaroo Reserve

Sydney's newest expanse of parkland, the six hectare Barangaroo Reserve, is the first major public area of the Barangaroo precinct to open. Walkways, bike lanes, plenty of grass, and lookouts all around, the transformation of one of Sydney's oldest industrial sites is especially significant because it's the first time in 100 years since public access has been permitted to the area. Native trees and shrubs are featured prominently throughout the grounds (almost 74,000 spanning 83 different species) to emulate the headland's former life.

● [barangaroo.com](http://barangaroo.com)

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP  
LEFT Group climb; harbour  
Ferries passing the Sydney  
Opera House; Barangaroo  
headland; view of the Bondi  
to Bronte Walk





### Queen Victoria Building

Erected as a tribute to the long-reigning queen, the Queen Victoria Building is unrivaled when it comes to historical shopping experiences. Filling a whole city block, the magnificent structure was built when Sydney was going through a recession and the government purposefully commissioned the elegant Romanesque architecture so that some of Sydney's unemployed craftsmen could work on the project. Completed in 1891, the building has housed various businesses and today is home to almost 200 shops, with everything from luxury goods to trendy clothing spread over three exquisitely decorated levels.

● qvb.com.au

# Shopping

### Oxford Street

Oxford Street stretches from Hyde Park through Paddington and on to Centennial Park and Woolhara and if you were to stop in at every shop it could be one long walk... Shops encompass just about anything – from eclectic, unique finds towards the start of the route in Darlinghurst, to boutique and high-end clothing by some of Australia's best designers in Paddington. If a side street looks interesting make time to explore – Crown Street, William Street and Glenmore Road all offer great options for fashionistas.



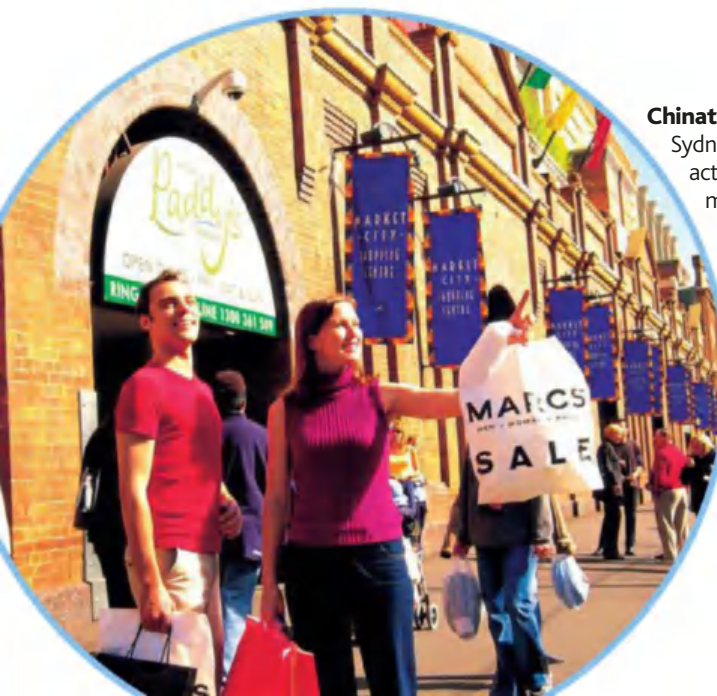
### The Star

Sydney's entertainment precinct, The Star, is home to The Star Casino and a plethora of leisure offerings, including highly acclaimed restaurants, stylish bars and two hotels. For luxury buys the shopping atrium offers a cluster of international luxury retailers conveniently located in the one spot, including finds such as Salvatore Ferragamo, Chanel Fragrance and Beauty Boutique, Gucci, Calvin Klein Jeans and Bottega Veneta.

● star.com.au

### Chinatown and Haymarket

Sydney's Chinatown is a bustling hive of activity by day and night and a meander through the lively district is a great way to soak up Sydney's multicultural vibe. The food, of course, is fantastic (this is the bee's knees of casual Chinese dining in Sydney) and the shopping is just as fun. Tiny Asian pop culture stores, factory outlets, homeware stores, Chinese grocers, lively markets and more – half the fun is getting lost and accidentally ending up with a quirky shopping find.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP**  
**LEFT** Interior of the Queen Victoria Building shopping centre; shopping on Oxford Street; The Star shopping arcade; Paddy's Markets and Market City shopping centre in Chinatown and Haymarket



## SYDNEY AT A GLANCE

### Foys Kirribilli

Sydney is known for its seafood and a visit wouldn't be complete without a quality seafood meal at an impressive destination. Welcome to Foys Kirribilli!

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club has recently been refurbished into seafood restaurant, boasting stunning harbour views and clean-line décor that complements the club's heritage. Seafood is the star here – order the seafood plate to share amongst friends (grilled prawns, calamari, lemon and thyme BBQ octopus and pan-seared market fish are included) and do Sydney food like a Sydney-sider would.

● [facebook.com/foyskirribilliflyingbear](https://facebook.com/foyskirribilliflyingbear)



LEFT The view from the Lower Tower at Quay  
ABOVE Foys Kirribilli

### Quay

Quay amazes in terms of both cuisine and vistas and is considered to be one of Australia's best restaurants (it has been listed in S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants for five years in a row). Head chef Peter Gilmore wows diners with nature-based imaginative dishes. Matching wines (a large selection of both Australian and international drops available) are recommended. The views seal the deal – sweeping panoramas from the Sydney Opera House to the Sydney Harbour Bridge – what more could you ask for?

● [quay.com.au](https://quay.com.au)

Food

### Mr. Wong

There's no shortage of Chinese restaurants in Sydney, but for the best contemporary Cantonese cuisine, Mr. Wong is a fine choice. A menu spanning more than 60 dishes (think assorted dim sums, sweet and sour pork hock, five-spice pork belly and live mud crab, to name a few), a top-notch cocktail list, and an artsy fit-out make for a memorable meal. Popular with groups, couples and just about anyone who knows how to have a rollicking good night out.

● [merivale.com.au/mrwong](https://merivale.com.au/mrwong)

### nel. restaurant

For seasonal, fresh contemporary Australian fare amid industrial-chic surroundings, newbie nel. restaurant has the hottest seat in town. Chef Nelly Robinson (aged just 29) and his team meticulously craft dishes that dazzle in an open kitchen – so that guests can observe the artistry while dining. Set degustation menus that are changed up monthly are the name of the game here, with two matching wines per course. Expect something different and expect to be impressed.

● [nelrestaurant.com.au](https://nelrestaurant.com.au)



Nelly Robinson and his contemporary fare



Mr. Wong's grunge chic interiors





# Kaleidoscopic Affair at Central Market, Kuala Lumpur

Celebrate the Festival of Lights, Deepavali, with Central Market this November with an exciting array of events and celebration line-up

Ideally located in the heart of Kuala Lumpur within close proximity to public transportation hubs and major hotels, Central Market is the one-stop destination for all things Malaysian – including Culture, Heritage, Art & Craft and other trinkets or souvenirs. This year, Central Market will be celebrating the festival of Deepavali with a special kolam display right inside the mall together with various acts and performances that promise endless hours of fun and entertainment for you and your travel companions.

## The true meaning of Deepavali

"Deepavali" is the combination of words 'dipa' (light) and 'gavali' (row). The name translates to 'The Festival of Lights', which can be seen through millions of lights shining through rooftops, outside doors and windows of Hindu and Sikh family homes, as well as outside temples and other religious buildings. The warm golden lights are seen through the simple act of lighting oil lamps. These lights represent the dispelling of darkness and the representation of good conquering evil. Often, gifts are also exchanged between family and friends.

In Malaysia, Deepavali is one of the most highly dignified celebration and tradition amongst the Indians and Punjabis. The festival represents a time

## Gastronomic Delights and more

In line with the Deepavali celebrations, Central Market is planning a feast of sensorial excitements. Tuck into some traditional cuisines such as Cendol and Nasi Lemak or have the option of dining in swanky cafés, served up with western cuisines and a selection of desserts.

Apart from food, enjoy the warmth of the festival with fashionable Indian apparels and accessories, lovely home décor ornaments and furnishing, and intricate henna hand art, or simply lean back and enjoy the Indian cultural entertainment.

We look forward to seeing you and Happy Deepavali wfrom Central Market!



For more information, log on to [www.centralmarket.com.my](http://www.centralmarket.com.my)





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# Visions of BEAUTY

Where is the world's most beautiful place? An eclectic mix of experts, from architect Zaha Hadid to illustrator Quentin Blake, share their very personal suggestions







# Monsal Dale, England

HANNAH OBEÉ, CURATOR AT CHATSWORTH

The Headstone Viaduct  
crosses the River Wye  
in Monsal Dale, Peak  
District, Derbyshire

When I moved up to work at Chatsworth, I remember driving through the Peak District and thinking how bleak it looked, but in time I came to love the moors and crags – they are so wild and natural. Sitting in front of a panoramic view like Monsal Dale is almost like witnessing creation. It brings a sense of perspective, and the natural beauty is infinitely restorative. This is where I go when I need to clear my head: perhaps because it's a green place, the kindest colour on the eye. There's a wonderful gradation of colours, with the deepest green along the valley floor.

The Headstone Viaduct is part of a long-abandoned railway line. I like to think of when the railways first arrived, connecting different parts of the country and opening up new possibilities. It inspires my work as a curator to think that mankind can intervene in a natural landscape and make it even more beautiful with a structure such as this. It gives me hope that we can bring good things to the world. In the end, places are beautiful not just for their appearance but for the reasons that bring us to them, and the people we meet there.

A ticket to Chatsworth costs £21 ([chatsworth.org](https://www.chatsworth.org)).









Punchbowl Falls in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, Oregon



Kangaroos in the arid, semi-desert outback of Sturt National Park, New South Wales



## Punchbowl Falls, USA

ALYS FOWLER,  
GARDENER

My husband comes from Portland, Oregon – I stole him away. I'm not sure why he let me do that, because it's an amazing city with such lush countryside around it. When you fly in, you spend hours over thick forest – it seems like the city has been recently cut out of the wilderness.

Just outside the city is the Columbia Gorge hiking trail, which takes in old-growth forest, huge waterfalls, deep basins of glacial water, giant boulders and such wonderful wildlife. The wildflowers are amazing – trilliums, sundews, mahonias and heucheras, to name a few. Seeing plants growing in their natural setting is always so interesting. I think it's key to good gardening, to go and explore.

The punchbowls are a series of natural glacial bowls that sit like jewels between the waterfalls and gorge. I went for a dip in the largest – the water was crystal clear and freezing cold, and the noise of the waterfall was almost deafening. The pool looks small and fairly shallow, but once in you realise it's very, very deep and the thing you thought was a fallen branch is actually a giant, sunken redwood. Terrifying and thrilling, all at once.

Alys was a presenter on the BBC's *Great British Garden Revival* ([alysfowler.wordpress.com](http://alysfowler.wordpress.com)).



## Sturt National Park, Australia

THEO ALLOFS,  
PHOTOGRAPHER

I've never seen such an abundance of red kangaroos as I did in this remote corner of New South Wales. I love the atmosphere of the outback: a landscape of red soil, rocks and blue sky. It's getting rare to find places like this – vast open spaces without many people. Here, I feel like I'm home.

Theo's image, above, is shortlisted in Wildlife Photographer of the Year ([nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/wpy](http://nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/wpy)).

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROB TILLEY, DANITA DELIMONT/AGEFOTOSTOCK, THEO ALLOFS



## BEAUTIFUL PLACES



### Audierne Bay, France

ANDREA NIXON,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
TATE LIVERPOOL

This region of France is called Finistère, or 'Land's End', and you really do get that sense – the Atlantic is huge, and the next stop is America. It's a special place, and very alive – the weather is wild and dangerous; the bay is full of shipwrecks.

The landscape is incredible and full of ancient places, standing stones and old chapels. There is a tiny seventh-century chapel near the village of Tréguennec called Saint-Vio. Towards the end of the day, when it's quiet and you're the only

person left in the building, you can feel how it is synonymous with the landscape; they're coming from the same spiritual place. There's a lot of art in this landscape, and during the summer festival, L'Art dans les Chapelles, you can scramble down to a little chapel and find it's full of contemporary work; and I really get a kick out of that.

I love the sea, it's very important to me. It's the fact that colours and light change all the time by water, and the sense that it will be coming up and going down twice a day, forever. In my work, there's also that sense of transition – what we put in the galleries changes all the time, and commissions are often very much about responding to a space or a landscape.

Catch Henri Matisse's most iconic works at Tate Liverpool ([tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool](http://tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool)).



Bath with a view at Ballyvolane House in County Cork



### Ballyvolane House, Ireland

ORLA KIELY, FASHION DESIGNER

County Cork is a green and magical place, and Ballyvolane is one of Ireland's oldest houses. Built around 1728, it is wonderfully grand – the pillared hall is something quite special. The interior is perfect for unwinding, settling down to play cards or read a book. It's a place to relax and find serenity, and the gardens and woodland are very peaceful – in spring, the bluebells are spectacular.

Rooms at Ballyvolane start from US\$240 ([ballyvolanehouse.ie](http://ballyvolanehouse.ie)). See Orla's work at [orkiely.com](http://orkiely.com).



The Atlantic sweeps on to Audierne Bay in Finistère, Brittany





# Romney Marsh, England

QUENTIN BLAKE, ILLUSTRATOR

I was brought up in the London suburbs, and I remember going on a school outing to Winchelsea, just near Romney Marsh. Maybe it's because I went there when I was young, but I've been impressed with the area ever since. I like that flat landscape, it has a wonderful light. It's constantly changing, and the skies above it as well. Somehow the atmosphere has a special magic.

A lot of the things I draw are people talking to each other, gesturing, running about. I put the scenery in as I need it, and I suppose a vast landscape like that in Kent is quite the same – you don't have to put the scenery in unless you need it. Everything within it becomes much more important. If everything is flat and you see only a tree, the tree becomes very important to the landscape. It's endlessly fascinating to me.

See *Quentin Blake: Inside Stories* at London's The Lightbox till 17 January 2016 ([thelightbox.org.uk](http://thelightbox.org.uk)).



St Thomas à Becket Church, on Romney Marsh, Kent, once served the village of Fairfield, which has long since disappeared





## Lalibela, Ethiopia

DAN CRUICKSHANK, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

The rock churches of Lalibela are a wonderful reversal of the normal process of construction, whereby one creates space by building. Here one excavates space by burrowing in: mistakes cannot be put right because you've cut into the rock itself. There are about a dozen churches around Lalibela, hewn from the rock on which the town sits. It is a remote place – more so now than it was in the 12th century, when the Ethiopian king Lalibela first created it

as an African version of Jerusalem. But it still has a strong sense of pilgrimage.

I visited for my series *Around the World in 80 Treasures*, and arrived during a quite astonishing festival. Empress Helena is celebrated in Orthodox Christianity for having found the true cross, and every September the town holds a feast in her honour, with parades of the Lalibela Cross – a sacred 12th-century relic. Being there at this time heightened one's senses, and

inflamed one's imagination. Ideas of the holiness of rock pop up all around the world – in the pyramids of Egypt, the structures at Petra, and at Stonehenge. Seeing buildings sculpted from rock makes you think of the very nature of architecture. It makes you aware of the possibilities of invention and imagination.

Dan was the presenter of *The Great Scotts*, a BBC Four programme on Gothic Revival architecture.



Bet Giyorgis – the Church of St George – carved out of red volcanic rock in Lalibela





The private island of Parrot Cay, part of the Turks and Caicos Islands in the Caribbean



## Parrot Cay, Turks and Caicos Islands

JO MALONE, PERFUMER

I have been to Parrot Cay every year since the first month the resort opened, in 1998. It's a very small island with a wonderful beauty to it: no cars, completely flat, with the whitest beach and blue, blue ocean. There are mangroves and a coral reef offshore, and my favourite thing is to go onto the beach when the sun is setting and collect sand dollars – the flat, dried shells of sea urchins.

The first time I went to the island, there were turtles crawling up on to the neighbouring beach as I came in by boat. Another particularly special moment happened as I was walking on the beach

early one morning. I saw a stingray swimming alongside me in the water, and it stopped whenever I stopped.

I can't work or be creative in a cluttered environment, and Parrot Cay is very much a plain canvas. I wanted to make a fragrance that was unbelievably simple, like that white sand. The whispering citrus note of pomelo was just perfect. Parrot Cay is a place where I can just think – it's soul food for me.

Rooms at Parrot Cay start at US\$456 (comohotels.com/parrotcay). Find out more about Jo Malone's new fragrance business, Jo Loves, at joloves.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS: PHILIP LEE HARVEY, IAN CUMMING/GETTY IMAGES





# Istanbul, Turkey

ZAHA HADID, ARCHITECT

Istanbul is like a second home to me, somewhere I try to come at least once a year. The city has inspired me since I first visited with my family, as a teenager. We did the full tour – Topkapı Palace, the Blue Mosque and the island of Büyükada, where my cousins and I piled into a donkey cart that took us to the Aya Yorgi church and monastery.

I fell in love with the complexity of Istanbul. There are so many rich layers

to the city, and you never know what to expect around the next corner. It's a metropolis built of small villages, with distinct shapes and personalities. I think the many layers of Istanbul are evident in my work. When there are many different uses within one project, we think of the building as an urban landscape.

The Grand Bazaar is a labyrinth of streets and shops, full of unexpected treasures, and I never tire of going there. When the sun sets, the architectural structures around the bazaar always somehow catch the light. The Basilica Cistern is one of the most stunning things in the world – it's a magnificent piece of engineering and infrastructure. Towards the back there are two marble stone capitals with Medusa

carved on them, that reflect beautifully in the water. And the world wouldn't be the same without Dolmabahçe Palace, with its carved gates that have the texture of stone lace. I like the futuristic shapes of the minarets of Süleymaniye Mosque, and the Church of St Stephen of the Bulgars, which is one of the world's last surviving prefabricated cast-iron churches.

Throughout the city you feel the mixture of East and West. It's like a fantastic collage of many histories and cultures, a beautiful landscape floating on the Bosphorus.

Zaha has designed the Messner Mountain Museum Corones, located at the top of Mount Kronplatz in South Tyrol, Italy, which was completed last September ([zaha-hadid.com](http://zaha-hadid.com)).





The 17th-century  
Blue Mosque –  
named for the blue  
tiles adorning its  
interior – in Istanbul



Petersham Nurseries, on  
the outskirts of London,  
features a garden centre,  
teahouse and restaurant



## Petersham Nurseries, London, England

RICHARD E GRANT, ACTOR,  
DIRECTOR AND PERFUMER

Entering the greenhouses,  
you are overwhelmed  
by the scent of jasmine,  
growing floor to ceiling  
and everywhere in between,  
followed by the smell of  
Italian food being cooked  
in the kitchen.

Find out more about the garden-centre-cum-restaurant  
at [petershamnurseries.com](http://petershamnurseries.com).

PHOTOGRAPHS: ZAHRA HADID BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE, NIKADA/CETTY IMAGES, STEPHANIE WOLFF PHOTOGRAPHY



## BEAUTIFUL PLACES



### Florida Keys, USA

FABIEN COUSTEAU,  
OCEAN EXPLORER

My grandfather Jacques Cousteau created the world's first ocean-floor habitat for humans. Because of this, I'd always been curious about living underwater. I found out about Aquarius Reef Base in the Florida Keys – the world's only underwater laboratory – and recently led an expedition there. I lived inside this tube for 31 days, one day longer than my grandfather's team, in homage to those who came before us.

The Florida Keys has the largest subtropical reef system in North America: an underwater city, home to countless species. Living at this frontier, I saw a fireworks-like display of life – the majesty of Christmas tree worms giving off a purple-white smoke as they spawn, or an endangered goliath grouper attacking a barracuda, something no-one had ever observed before.

The ocean is my home. I could spend an hour looking at a square metre of reef and see a tiny soap opera play out before my eyes. For me, it's like sitting on a bench in London or Paris and watching life pass by. Returning to the surface was bittersweet.

Find out more about Fabien's project at [mission-31.com](http://mission-31.com).



Christmas tree worms in Key Largo, part of the Florida Keys



The Scoppa Arch  
in Ostuni, Puglia



### Ostuni, Italy

FLORENCE KNIGHT, CHEF

Ostuni is a beautiful town that sits astride three hills overlooking the sea. It is known as 'Città Bianca', as almost all the buildings are painted white. Ostuni is steeped in the gastronomic traditions of Puglia. I tasted the best focaccia I've ever eaten, and it is also famous for orecchiette pasta. I'll never forget watching the locals make it by hand, rolling out a small sausage of dough and then cutting and dragging out the shape. The women make it look easy, but it takes years of practice – and these 'little ears' are absolutely delicious.

Florence is the head chef at Italian restaurant Polpetto in London ([polpetto.co.uk](http://polpetto.co.uk)).





## Dunhuang, China

YANG FUDONG, INSTALLATION ARTIST

I first heard about the Buddhist artworks of Dunhuang when I was a kid, and the city became something I longed to see. I got my chance when I was teaching at the China Academy of Art, and our studio took a tour there – an unforgettable experience. Dunhuang was once a major hub for travellers on the ancient Silk Road, and the desert landscape is still engraved with desolate traces of that history.

The city itself is beautiful, an oasis in the desert, but what fascinated me most were the sculptures and murals in the grottoes of Mogao and Yulin, both magnificent cultural

treasures. I was shocked and deeply touched by the works of these anonymous craftsmen. There was a moment, looking down from a mountain top, when the sandy wind caught me up in a reverie – I couldn't imagine how the ancients had built up such grandeur, hidden in these seemingly empty surroundings. For me Dunhuang is the holy land of Eastern art – its influence is like oxygen melting in my blood, invisible but long lasting.

See Yang's work as part of Arctic cultural project SALT ([salted.no](http://salted.no)).

Crescent Lake, a fresh-water spring on the outskirts of Dunhuang





Tresco Abbey Gardens was originally a 19th-century private garden



## Tresco Abbey Gardens, Isles of Scilly

EMMA MAWSTON, LIBERTY PRINT DESIGNER

Tresco has a diverse landscape for such a small island – very like Cornwall, but more intimate. The Abbey Gardens is a subtropical oasis with an extraordinary diversity of plant life, so seemed a natural place to visit when I needed inspiration for a botanical collection. One morning, I was there when the sea fret lifted, leaving a gleaming array of foliage and flora – a moment which brought tears to my eyes.

Find out more at [tresco.co.uk/enjoying/abbey-garden](http://tresco.co.uk/enjoying/abbey-garden). See Liberty's fabric collection at [liberty.co.uk](http://liberty.co.uk).

PHOTOGRAPHS: TRESKO ISLAND, JACK'S CAMP © UNCHARTED AFRICA/LUXURYSAFARICAMPS.COM, CARMEL KING







## Kalahari Desert, Botswana

ROBIN HUTSON, HOTELIER

A year ago, I took on a month-long motorbike expedition across southern Africa – biking through Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, sometimes taking unmapped tracks, along which I didn't see humans for a whole day. The highlight was staying at Jack's Camp on the edge of the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. It's a luxury camp that looks a bit like something from an old-school safari expedition: tents full of antiques, looking out over the savannah.

But what I found most beautiful was its location: in a wilderness unblemished by humans. As well as game drives, the guides took us out into the salt pans of the Kalahari. Maybe an hour from the camp

we were in a place where there was absolutely no physical reference point for 360 degrees: not a tree, not a rock, just shimmering nothingness. The guides said to us: 'Go and lie on the salt for five minutes and gather your thoughts.' In my business there are a million details to pay attention to – you get slightly obsessed with getting

them all right. But this place reminded me that the world is in fact big, and sometimes we're all too wrapped up in the comings and goings of our own little worlds.

Rooms at Jack's Camp start at US\$876 pp ([unchartedafrica.com](http://unchartedafrica.com)). Robin is CEO of the Lime Wood Group ([limewoodgroup.co.uk](http://limewoodgroup.co.uk)).



Jack's Camp, set on the edge of the Kalahari Desert's Makgadikgadi Pans National Park





## Pennan, Scotland

DONNA WILSON, HOMEWARES DESIGNER

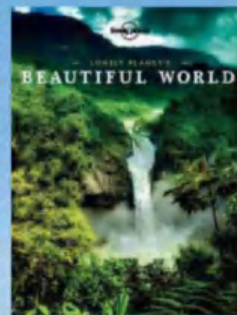
Pennan is a tiny fishing village of about 50 cottages, adorning the coast like a bit of lace. I grew up about 20 miles away inland, and my grandma would take me there when I was little. It's a magical place – so peaceful, quaint and intimate, but with amazing huge skies. It has one pub, a beautiful old harbour and a pebbly beach. Standing there, you could be a million miles away from everyday life. We would walk along collecting bits of driftwood, worn-down glass and strange stones with holes right through them.

In atmosphere as well as distance, Pennan

is about as far as you can get from where I live now in busy east London. Pennan makes me feel free; it's always good to blow away the cobwebs in the sea breeze. It's so quiet, particularly in the winter months, as most of the population move out because the seas get so fierce. Its colours, skies and closeness with nature have informed the way I work since I was an art student. And I love the fact that – because it's completely contained by the rocks and cliffs – Pennan can't get any bigger. It stands still in time.

See Donna's work at [donnawilson.com](http://donnawilson.com).

The film *Local Hero* was shot in Pennan, making a star of its harbourside red telephone box



Get your copy of *Lonely Planet's Beautiful World* (US\$29.99) for 224 pages of thought-provoking images from the world's most inspiring destinations and see the world like you've never seen it before.



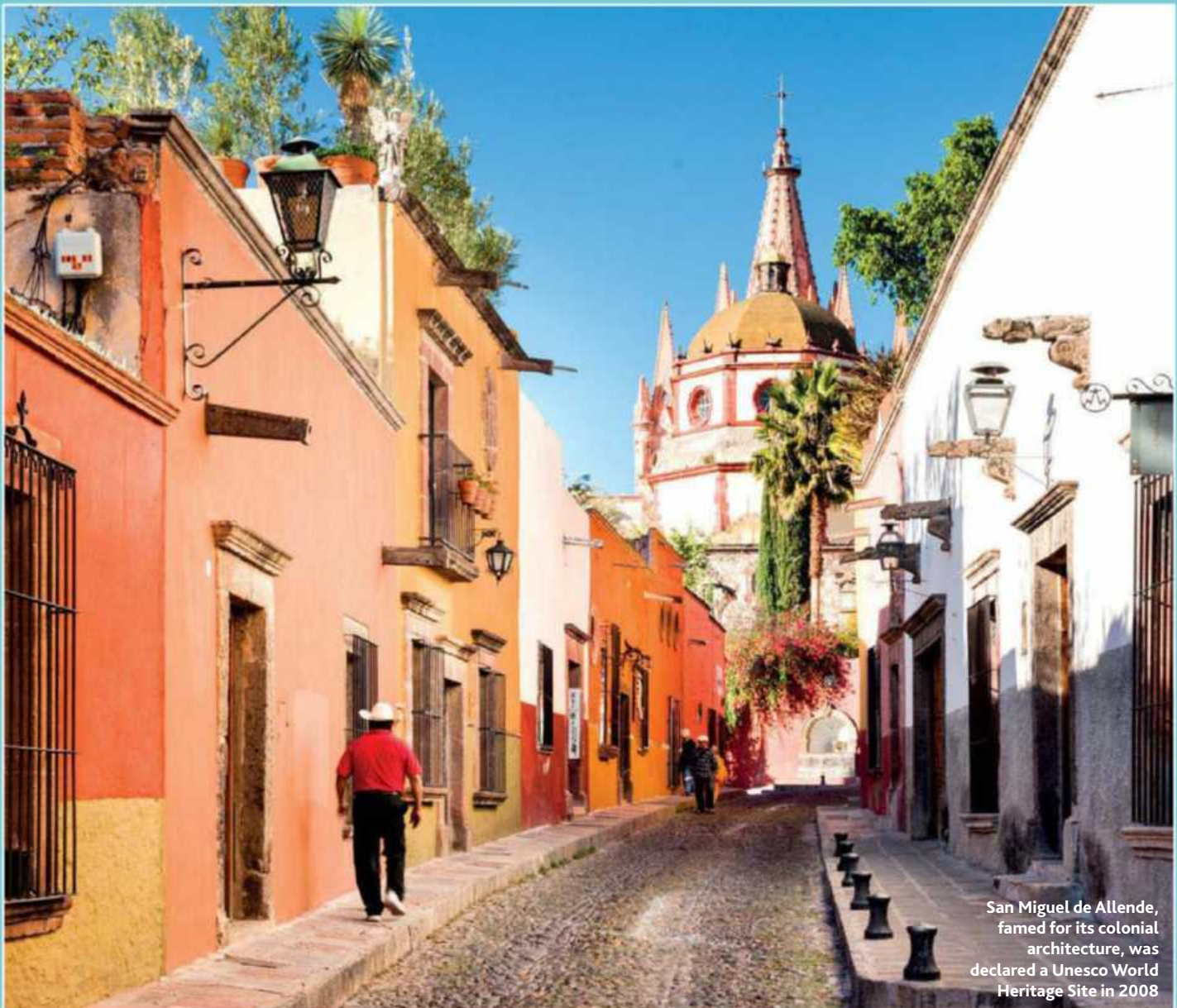


# Great Escape

## MEXICO

Head to the south of this huge country to experience all that is best about Mexico – explore **vividly coloured towns**, cut through the jungle to find abandoned **Mayan cities**, sample heady mezcal and world-class **street food**, and escape the crowds to unwind on scarcely visited **white-sand beaches**

WORDS DUNCAN CRAIG • PHOTOGRAPHS JUSTIN FOULKES



San Miguel de Allende, famed for its colonial architecture, was declared a Unesco World Heritage Site in 2008



# Plan your trip

**1** Discover revolutionary architecture on a visit to the cultured colonial town of **San Miguel de Allende** (p56)

**2** Sample the unique fruits of 10,000 years of culinary evolution on a **Oaxaca** street-food tour (p58)

**3** Head to the cloud villages of **Los Pueblos Mancomunados** to hike along ancient mountain trails (p60)

**4** Follow the call of howler monkeys and toucans to the jungle-entombed Mayan city of **Palenque** (p62)

**5** Slip into a totally chilled Caribbean mind-set in the virtually untouched coastal biosphere of **Sian Ka'an** (p64)



MAP ILLUSTRATION: ALEX VERHILLE. PHOTOGRAPHS: JOHN BLOCK/GETTY IMAGES, CLIVE STREETER/GETTY IMAGES, MIRAMAX FILMS/COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION/REX





## HOW TO GET THERE

Lufthansa and KLM both offer single carrier flights from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Mexico City, including one stop in France and Amsterdam respectively (from US\$1,879; klm.com).

## HOW TO GET AROUND

Such is the size of the country – roughly eight times that of the UK – it's probable that internal flights will feature at some stage. More than 60 cities have airports with scheduled services, with many services yo-yoing through Mexico City. Flag carrier Aeroméxico (aeromexico.uk.com) has the largest domestic coverage, with Interjet (interjet.com) another good option. The country's sound road infrastructure makes inter-city buses a viable alternative. Pay a little more for the more comfortable, air-conditioned executive buses. See ETN (etn.com.mx) or ADO (ado.com.mx).

## HOW LONG TO SPEND

Factoring in the 30-hour flying time from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Mexico City, a sleep-muddling 13-hour time difference and potentially large transfer times (see above), 10 days should be your minimum allotted time. To do justice to the five destinations in our Great Escape, allow nearer to two weeks, with at least two nights in each of the four inland spots and perhaps three to four nights kicking back on the fringes of the Caribbean Sea at the end of your trip before returning home.

## WHAT TO BUDGET

Your pound will go far further than in the UK, with good-quality accommodation available for the equivalent of around US\$90-US\$110 (for two, with breakfast) in popular towns, and less in more rural spots.

You'll struggle to spend more than US\$15 a head for a good meal, including a glass of tequila or mezcal, while US\$30 a head will get you a three-course dinner with wine in a top restaurant.

## WHEN TO GO

December to April/May are the driest months over most of Mexico. July and August make up peak holiday season for both Mexicans and overseas visitors, when the coastal resorts attract big crowds and prices go up. Avoid September, the peak of the hurricane season – a period that is usually accompanied by heavy rains in coastal areas.

## WHO CAN HELP

Virgin Holidays Worldwide offers a 16-day 'Treasures of Mexico' tour, taking in various sites across the country, including Oaxaca, Mexico City and Palenque, and including international flights, guides, air-conditioned transfers and some meals (from US\$2,809; virginholidaysjourneys.co.uk). For a more indulgent option, Bales Worldwide offers a 'Mexico's Classic Route in Style' package that incorporates the above plus sites such as the Mayan ruins of Chichén Itza and Agua Azul waterfalls in Chiapas, and includes 14 nights of first-class accommodation, domestic and international flights, and private transfers (from US\$6,185; balesworldwide.com).



## HOW TO PLAN

See Lonely Planet's *Mexico* (US\$29.99), and Mexico Tourism's official site, visitmexico.com.

## ON THE ROAD

### Eat

Chiles en nogada, a chile, walnut and pomegranate dish whose red, white and green colours mirror those of the Mexican flag. It often forms the culinary centrepiece of Mexican Independence Day on 16 September.



### Read

*The Power and the Glory*, Graham Greene's novel about a 'whisky priest' on the run in the Mexican state of Tabasco during the persecution of Catholics in the 1930s.



### Name-drop

Actress Salma Hayek, who played feminist icon and compatriot Frida Kahlo in the 2002 film *Frida*, and business magnate Carlos Slim Helú, who has been toppled from his spot as the world's richest man by Bill Gates. Don't feel too sad for him though – his net worth still stands at more than \$70 billion.



### Buy

Calaveras – sugar or clay-moulded skulls used in Day of the Dead celebrations in October/November.

### Drink

Agave-based mezcal, similar to tequila. Don't embarrass yourself by knocking it back with salt and lemon; it should be taken as it is and in tiny sips.



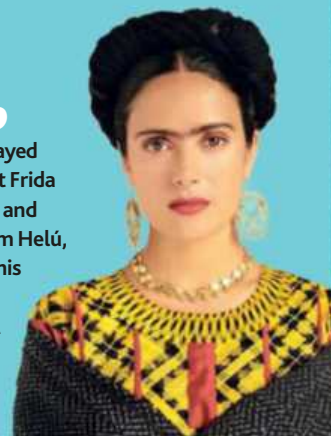
### Say

**'México es un país maravilloso'**

– Mexicans love to hear you're enjoying their country.

### Mention

Former England goalkeeper Gordon Banks. He enjoys hero status locally for his acrobatic deflection of a Pelé header in the 1970 World Cup in Guadalajara – considered the greatest save ever.







# *Your adventure awaits...*

Palenque's ancient  
Mayan ruins were  
built entirely without  
metal tools, pack  
animals or the wheel







# 1. San Miguel de Allende

Join the revolution in the town known as the 'Florence of Mexico' – a jewel of Spanish colonial architecture with a history as colourful and intriguing as its buildings



Local guide Arturo Morales Tirado

**A**RTURO MORALES TIRADO is having a hard time concentrating. Dressed in a pressed shirt and sombre jacket, the 56-year-old is making a good fist of interpreting a complex architectural feature high up on a church wall. But he's being interrupted with comic regularity by shouted greetings, proffered handshakes and affectionate kisses. He responds to each, the odd joke here, a high five or flirtatious wink there. Arturo is both guide and local celebrity, it seems.

This hint of a baroque personality lurking beneath an austere façade neatly mirrors his subject matter. Over three centuries of rule following the 16th-century conquest of Mexico, the Spanish sought to control the indigenous people by all means possible, including architecturally. Their favoured Neoclassical style was imposed – but the people of San Miguel were having none of it. They embellished wherever they could, adding decorative swirls and florid flourishes. Little wonder that when Mexico's War of Independence broke out in the early 19th century, the earliest skirmishes were here. The writing was on the wall.

'You can't control the real spirit of Mexican people,' says Arturo, reaching over to bump fists with a Stetson-wearing passer-by. 'We're naturally exuberant. The over-decoration of the Baroque style – this was an assertion of identity.' He leads the way across a small plaza, a squat fountain spuming at its centre. Squeezed between

sheer cliffs of grey limestone is the peach-hued façade of the Church of San Francisco. It is ostentatiously ornate, an implausible web of symbols and figurines. The centuries-old door at its base creaks on its hinges, sending a flight of doves skywards, their wings beating in the still afternoon air.

San Miguel's profusion of churches has earned it the epithet the 'Florence of Mexico'. But if there's a single motif to this 500-year-old colonial town, it's colour. Streets of flat-roofed, stucco-fronted homes flow down the hillside like painters' palettes: terracotta, paprika, ochre and vermilion, the vivid natural pigments enhanced by the peculiar clarity of light here, a mile up in the Guanajuato highlands. 'Mexico is a mega-diverse landscape bursting with energy,' says Arturo, turning into a favourite street. 'We take our lead from our environment.'

The street is narrow and silent. Heavy stone lintels and jambs frame oak doors that are hung with copper knockers shaped into lions or Aztecs, while iron balconies and railings bear the pleasing imperfections of the hand-wrought. Drainage shoots protrude like muskets, giving the appearance of a town under siege. For a while it was. It took a decade for the colonial masters to be overthrown, during which time San Miguel was ostracised for inspiring the insurrection. The Camino Real trading route connecting Mexico City with the silver mines in the north was diverted from the town and the population dwindled to a 10th of its 50,000 zenith. 'Time stopped,' says Arturo. It worked wonders for preservation. Like the mist that enshrouds the streets in the early mornings, the harsh light of progress was kept at bay.

Perhaps the only person better known in San Miguel than Arturo is the man who gave the town its suffix: Ignacio Allende, the extravagantly sideburned father of independence. His 18th-century mansion, now a museum, stands in the main square, opposite La Parroquia, the Gaudí-esque church that dominates the town's skyline. 'Hic natus, ubique notus' reads the inscription above the door: 'Born here, known everywhere'. Inside is a blend of architectural styles befitting the divergent impulses of a respected military leader turned conspirator. The central courtyard's suspended arch, a gargantuan keystone at

## Essentials



**Casa de los Olivos** This intimate, refined hotel is set in a restored single-storey colonial home a block from the main square. The five high-ceilinged rooms have a rustic feel, with heavy wood doors and iron bed frames, and are arranged around a courtyard swathed in orange-berried climbing plants popular with hummingbirds. Breakfast dishes such as chilaquiles – lightly fried tortillas with scrambled eggs, salsa and refried beans – can be taken on the lavender-scented terrace with views of San Miguel's skyline (from US\$162; [casadelosolivos.com](http://casadelosolivos.com)).

**Quetzalcóatl Tours** ([quetzalcoatl-tours.com](http://quetzalcoatl-tours.com)); **San Miguel de Allende tourism** ([visitsanmiguel.travel](http://visitsanmiguel.travel)).

its centre, is Neoclassical at its most elegant. But Baroque touches are, unsurprisingly, easy to find: flamboyant stone garlands massing on the underside of balconies; serpentine coils inching up the side of windows like decorative creepers.

Outside, dusk is gathering and a purple smudge silhouettes the distant Sierra de Guanajuato. A mariachi folk band strikes up in the square, serenading a couple who lean against a terracotta wall still radiating the heat of the day. The sound echoes through the streets to the semi-arid plains far below.

It's time for Arturo to take his leave. As he does, a passing acquaintance offers him a chocolate. Smiling, he accepts. 'Tequila truffle,' he says, popping it in his mouth. 'For the stress.'

Worked up an appetite? A three-hour drive to Mexico City and one-hour flight south will bring you to Oaxaca, Mexico's street-food capital. ➡



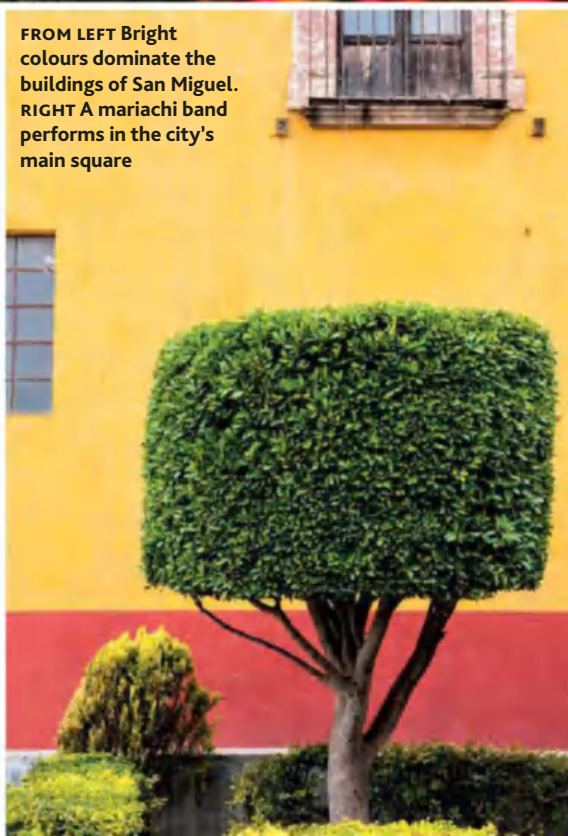
Parish church Parroquia de San Miguel Arcángel was built by indigenous stonemason Zeferino Gutiérrez, his design based upon a postcard of a Belgian church



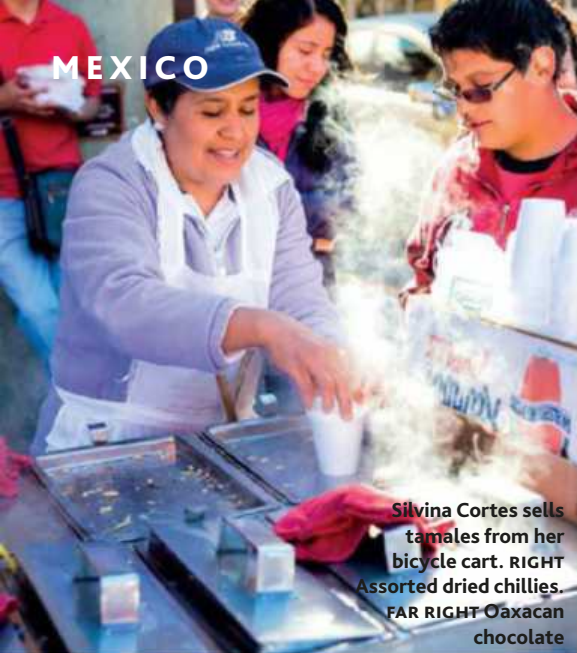
GREAT ESCAPE



FROM LEFT Bright colours dominate the buildings of San Miguel. RIGHT A mariachi band performs in the city's main square







Silvina Cortes sells tamales from her bicycle cart. RIGHT Assorted dried chillies. FAR RIGHT Oaxacan chocolate



## 2. Oaxaca

'The land of the seven moles' is the place to take your experience of Mexican food beyond the burrito; buckle up for a feast of tamales... and chilli-flavoured grasshoppers

**I**T'S PRE-DAWN IN THE southern city of Oaxaca and on a street corner an expectant crowd is gathered. Collars are turned up against the chill morning air, hands buried deep in pockets. A few cursory words are exchanged, but this is not a social gathering. These people are here for a purpose; it's just not entirely clear what.

There's a ring of a bell and around the corner comes Silvina Cortes, steam billowing from her customised tricycle. With a cheerful 'Buenos dias!' she pulls up, slides off the saddle and sets to work unwrapping, ladling and dispensing. Other customers arrive, drawn by the pungent aromas of corn and hot chocolate. By the time the first shards of sunlight strike the polished spokes of Silvina's bike 15 minutes later, she has served 30 people and counting.

Street food in Oaxaca is not so much an indulgence as a staple. Vendors occupy regulated spots around the city's grid of streets, enjoying a longevity and loyalty of custom that restaurateurs can only dream of. The emphasis is on inventiveness, with recipes honed over generations. Some are even older. Silvina sells tamales, Oaxaca's most popular street food and a derivative of the portable snacks that sustained the early Mesoamerican hunters who roamed the surrounding plains 10 millennia ago.

In essence, it is corn paste – or masa – steamed in corn husks or banana leaves until firm, and stuffed with pork or chicken (the ancient Mayans preferred flamingo or

frog). On to this is poured mole, a bafflingly complex chilli-based sauce of which Oaxaca has seven distinct varieties. Silvina prepares a tamale with mole negro and serves it in a rectangular bread roll. The dark sauce is thick, rich and tinged with garlic, the savoury masa core surprisingly fluffy. Making tamales is labour intensive; the appetite for it insatiable. 'Selling is the easy bit,' says a beaming Silvina, filling a cup with chocolate-flavoured corn juice – or champurrado – a popular accompaniment.

She's been working this pitch for 16 years. In Oaxacan terms, she's a new kid on the block. Half a mile away, through streets tinged with green limestone, Antonio Arango has sold out of yellow-and-black mole. Wearing an apron the colour of his irrepressible white moustache, the 76-year-old great-grandfather has the unconcerned air that comes with certainty of custom. There's always tomorrow. He is helped on his parasol-shaded stall by seven-year-old Cheyla, a family friend and the same age as Antonio when he started.

As they work, a truck pulls up and begins to disgorge rolls of gelatinous white Oaxacan cheese into the adjacent Mercado Juárez, the central market. Its labyrinthine walkways overflow with exotic produce. The state capital is the shop window for the inexhaustible supply of ingredients and culinary styles generated in the wider state of Oaxaca, one of Mexico's most geographically and ethnically diverse.

Opposite the entrance a woman's head pokes from behind glistening pyramids capped by foil cups. These are chapulines, or grasshoppers. They're divided by size and coating – the garlic are bronze, the chilli-flavoured ones a fiery red. It's customary to eat the larger ones using the back legs like tooth picks; the smaller ones are easier on the stomach – and eye – and are often served with cheese or guacamole, or crumbled on to other dishes. 'The husbands catch them in the alfalfa fields, and we sell them,' says the woman, clearly happy with the arrangement. Prodigious and proteinous, they've sustained many a community in times of shortage.

A short walk away, Maria Teresa Sierra is using the mid-afternoon lull to take stock. She realigns her stall with the shifting shade and starts to rebuild her pyramids of potted jellies and custards. Beneath are wedges of chocolate and fruit-glazed cakes, and cauldrons of jelly chunks bobbing in liquids of radioactive brilliance. It's like a menu concocted by a six-year-old.

Maria's spot is an envied one, on the corner of the central Zócalo with its squat, crenellated cathedral and forest of rampant Indian laurel trees – the tallest features in this earthquake-wary city. She doesn't squander it, working 15 hours a day serving up to 300 customers. Dressed in azure sweatshirt and pink spherical earrings, her demeanour is as bright as the produce. But it's hard work, and the odd break is essential. Spotting a passing friend, she





Street-made tortillas. LEFT Antonio Arango, purveyor of mole sauces. FAR LEFT Mercado Juárez

calls her over to mind the stall. 'I'll be five minutes,' she says, handing over her leather money belt. 'I'm just grabbing a tamale.'

It's time to work off the abundance of Oaxaca; drive or take the bus for 90 minutes to the village of Benito Juárez, via Mexico 190 Highway and an unsealed mountain road for the next step. ➡

## Essentials



**Quinta Real Oaxaca** Monastic in setting, if not ethos, this luxury hotel occupies a converted 16th-century convent that sprawls across an entire block of central Oaxaca. Within its thick stone walls, echoing cloisters lead to an assortment of snug courtyards with box trees, trickling stone fountains and overhanging bougainvillea. There's an inviting pool and cavernous, mural-adorned chapel that serves as a banquet hall. Rooms have polished stone floors, window seats and lamps decorated with Mexican folk art (from US\$162; [quintareal.com](http://quintareal.com)).

**Oaxaca tourism** ([visitmexico.com/en/oaxaca](http://visitmexico.com/en/oaxaca)).



Silvina Cortes sells tamales from her bicycle cart



### 3. Los Pueblos Mancomunados

Strap on your hiking boots and take to the mountains; countryside views, possible jaguar encounters and village celebrations lurk round every corner

The thickly forested highlands are ideal for wildflowers. BELOW Maguey can be used to make paper, thatching, clothing, food and mezcal



**T**HEY CALL THE inhabitants of the eight villages that make up the region of Los Pueblos Mancomunados the 'people of the clouds'. Today, with the sky a dome of burnished blue, the name seems strikingly inapt. A trace of white on the horizon offers a hint of cloud, but on closer inspection reveals itself to be the frosted tip of Pico de Orizaba, nearly 200 miles to the north.

From here, it's possible to look down on half of Mexico. To the south, so far below that they're still cloaked in darkness, are the plains of central Oaxaca. A turbulent sea of pine and oak forest extends north and west, its tips daubed by the first rays of dawn.

'Some days the cloud comes in and we can barely see five metres,' says guide Diego Ceballos, setting off down a looping hillside path. 'But today we're in luck.' Some 70 miles of walking trails link the settlements of Los Pueblos. Some follow routes first cut by the Zapotecs, a pre-Aztec people who believed they were descended from the jaguars and ocelots that still roam these mountains.

Gradient, altitude and a glut of natural distractions ensure a snail's pace holds sway. 'Smell this,' says Diego, scooping up a handful of leaves from beneath a clump of delicate white flowers. A citrus scent fills the air – it is Oaxaca lemon verbena. Boiled in water, with a dash of sugar, it's a refreshing relaxant. Beneath moss-draped boughs reverberating with the call of goldfinches, the forest floor is specked with yellow. This is cardosanto, a diuretic used to treat headaches and kidney pain. The path is marked at regular intervals by maguey plants, their canoe-sized leaves giving way to stalks inhabited by woodpeckers. The plant was worshipped in pre-Hispanic times for its life-giving properties but, more pertinently for weary hikers, it's the source of mezcal, a smoky version of tequila.

Each of the villages has its respective guides. Waiting in a clearing suffused with the smell of pine is Adelfo Luis Martinez. Like Diego, he has lived his whole life in these mountains and can follow the trails with the certainty of his bloodhound Jack tracking a white-tailed deer. He leads the way along a path and into Cuajimuloyas. A wedding procession is in full swing, the bride and groom striding up the main street

led by a phalanx of trombonists, drummers and one man being garroted by an enormous tuba. Trailing behind is a crowd that far outnumbers the population of the small village; as with the busy calendar of fiestas, everyone in these mountains is expected to attend such events.

The last stragglers of the cortège pass



and once more the village is silent. Adelfo whistles Jack to heel and opens the door to the village comedor. 'We continue,' he says with a warm smile. 'But first, some mezcal.'

It's time for jungle adventures... hop on a plane to Villahermosa, via Mexico City, and catch the bus or a taxi for the two-hour journey to Palenque. ➡

#### Essentials



**Benito Juárez** As with all the villages, accommodation is in basic but comfortable timber and stone cabañas with bunk beds, table and chairs, and hot showers (either communal rooms or private rooms with a communal bathroom). Each has a central fireplace that can be lit by guides on request. Meals are served in the adjacent, tangerine-coloured comedor (village restaurant), with staples such as chicken tortillas with refried beans and locally foraged mushrooms, and tostados – crispy fried tortillas topped with grated cheese, chopped avocado and salsa. Expect to pay around US\$31 for two sharing a private cabaña.

**Expediciones Sierra Norte** Offers hiking, horseback and mountain biking tours, and can arrange transfers from Oaxaca (two-day trips from US\$108 per person; [sierranorte.org.mx](http://sierranorte.org.mx)).



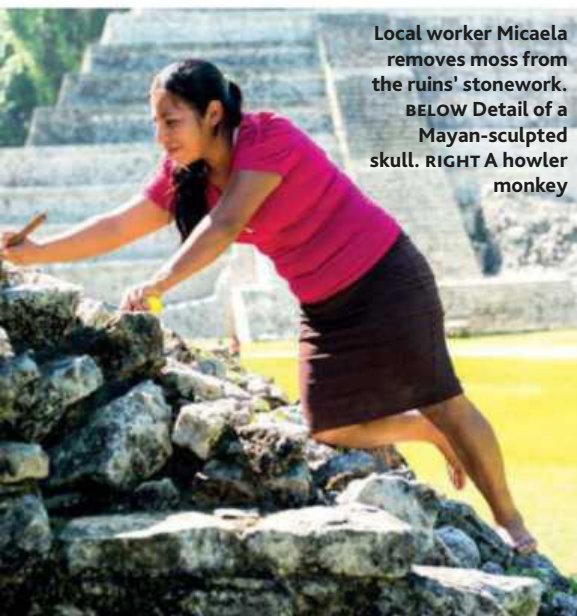
Guide Adelfo Luis Martinez  
takes in the view with  
his bloodhound Jack.  
LEFT Many official walking  
routes are based upon  
original Zapotec trails





## 4. Palenque

Don a fedora and grab a whip – in the jungles of the Chiapas region, Palenque is the place to bring all your Indiana Jones fantasies to life



Local worker Micaela removes moss from the ruins' stonework. **BELOW** Detail of a Mayan-sculpted skull. **RIGHT** A howler monkey



**I**T'S HARD WORK, ESPECIALLY when the sun is high,' says 25-year-old Micaela, prising moss from the ancient stonework. 'But if we don't do this then the ruins will be...' She searches for the appropriate word. 'Reclaimed.' Sure-footed and dexterous, she works high up on the vertiginous flanks of Palenque's palace. From somewhere deep in the encircling jungle, a howler monkey cries out, its bark like the inexpert sawing of a stubborn log. It disturbs a pair of keel-billed toucans, which angle across the canopy in a flash of red and yellow.

Working with a sharpened strip of chewing-gum tree wood known as a 'paleta', Micaela and a small group of fellow

workers attend to the dozen or so principle ruins at Palenque in rotation. So vast are the structures built by her forebears, and so rapacious the habitat, that it's a perpetual process. The jungle in the foothills of the Sierra Norte de Chiapas is among the most vigorous on Earth. Great storm clouds of vegetation mass around the pyramids, dangling vines like prying fingers. Little wonder that when the Mayans abruptly and mysteriously abandoned this site in 900AD, it was soon consumed, lying undiscovered for the best part of a millennium.

Much of it remains so. Only an estimated five per cent of this city-state has been excavated – a salvaged Trafalgar Square in a London overrun by floodwater. The site's tentacular paths offer a sense of what the 18th-century Spanish explorers who came in search of a rumoured lost city would have found. The remnants of a collapsed arch lies on its side, enmeshed in torso-thick tree roots. A lichen-coated mound rises from the jungle floor, the symmetry of the lone block protruding from its summit the only clue to its man-made substance. Picked out by an angled shaft of sunlight, an iguana lounges on a stone slab, as rigid as a sculpture. Everywhere is the sound of water: striking leaves in corpulent drops; rushing underfoot in unseen tributaries.

Back at the palace, Micaela and her friends are taking their midday break. The women come from El Naranjo, a nearby settlement of the Tzeltal people – one of the indigenous groups that emerged from the Classic Maya's sudden demise. The adjacent Temple of the Inscriptions is the most photographed of Palenque's structures, but El Palacio is perhaps the most compelling. The former was a funerary monument entombing the revered 7th-century ruler King Pakal; the latter was full of life. Presided over by an asymmetric tower that lends an Oriental flavour, the palace was primarily a royal residence. However, it also likely served as a religious, social and political focal point. It was a canvas for artwork celebrating the strength and vitality of its leaders, a place of entertainment and debate, of ceremonial banquets and coronations, and the site of ritual offerings and clamorous sacrifices. The pulsating hub of a key city in one of the most advanced

civilisations of its time – abruptly silenced.

So enlightened were the ancient Mayans in so many fields, from maths to art, engineering to astronomy, that it's easy to forget that they were at heart a Stone-Age culture. No metal tools were available to quarry or cut the blocks used to construct ever-grander cities like Palenque, no wheels or pack animals for transporting or lifting stones that could weigh up to 15 tons. Then, as now, it all came down to manpower. 'It's amazing how strong they were – far stronger than we are today,' says



Micaela, finishing her water and eating a last segment of mandarin.

And with that she packs up her things, picks up her sharpened paleta and returns to her task, a Canute-like figure battling to hold back the tide.

The final stage of the journey awaits. It's a 90-minute flight from Villahermosa to Cancún. From there, drive 112 miles to the beaches of the south. ➡

### Essentials



**Chan-Kah Resort Village** A couple of miles from town, and just a short walk from the entrance to Parque Nacional Palenque, this rambling resort makes for a good base from which to visit the ruins. Generously proportioned cottages with rocking chairs on their wooden verandas are embedded in a jungle setting through which howler monkeys crash and agoutis rootle. The 70-metre-long, naturally heated pool is lit at night and shaded by the boughs of a magnificent, century-old ceiba – the tree the Mayans believed held up the universe (from US\$123; chan-kah.com.mx).

**Palenque** Admission US\$4.65, 8am to 5pm (visitmexico.com/en/palenque); **Vamos Tours** offers guided tours of Palenque, with or without transfers from Villahermosa (2½-hour tour from US\$62 per person; vamostr.com).





Palenque's El Palacio was built and modified piecemeal over 400 years from the 5th century on





Birds gather around the appropriately named Bird Island



## 5. Sian Ka'an

It's time to relax – journey's end brings white-sand beaches whose peace is disturbed only by flamingos

**T**HE SOLE ACCESS TO Punta Allen is an undulating 32-mile jungle track that's the scourge of undercarriages, both human and vehicular. It's not something Punta Allen's few hundred residents complain about: it ensures that only the most committed peace-seekers make it this far.

The fishing town sits at the tip of a sandy spit extending into the pristine Sian Ka'an Biosphere, one of only a few settlements in a reserve the size of Norfolk. In appearance and spirit, the area is far closer to the Caribbean islands to the east than the more populous spots further north on the Yucatán Peninsula. Wild behaviour here is altogether more natural: manatees lolling in brackish channels; loggerhead turtles paddling through the aquamarine shallows; jaguars swimming across lagoons in search of fresh hunting territory.


'You do see some amazing things,' says Christian Canul, a 27-year-old fisherman

and part-time guide who has spent 20 years exploring the reserve's unmapped maze of mangrove forest and inland waterways. 'When I'm out on the water, every day is different.' Broad shouldered and chested – like many here, he freedives for lobster in his spare time – Christian is working on his launch in the shade of a coconut tree on Punta Allen's main beach. Painted with names such as Brisa Marina ('Sea Breeze') and Unicornio, these nimble fibreglass 'pangas' outnumber cars by a margin. With water on three sides, and 'the 32-mile speed bump' on the other, a boat in Punta Allen is a prized possession.

Christian is joined by his Dutch wife Monique, who plonks herself down on the powdery white sand. She has found the unlikelyst of niches in Sian Ka'an, helping to establish a network of nature trails around Punta Allen. Electricity can be sporadic, there are few shops and the social scene limited. 'Even with the difficulties of life, it is still like living in paradise,' she

says. 'Any day you just walk up to the beach and it takes your breath away.'

With the sun hanging low in the sky, Christian slides his panga into the shallows, tugs the outboard into life and sets off on an easterly course. A pelican skims the water alongside, inches from the surface. A small island appears, the sky above it an elegant helix of frigate birds. Known colloquially as Bird Island, this isolated clump of mangroves is an avian metropolis, free from the mainland's reptiles and other predators. Birds occupy every available branch.

A few miles west, Christian swings the boat into a narrow mangrove channel. The channel opens into an expanse of unbroken water, deserted save for a distant pair of flamingos, striding imperiously through the shallows. The ripples from the boat disperse to reveal the embers of the day mirrored in the surface of the water. Sian Ka'an was a Mayan appellation, meaning 'place where the sky is born'. The perplexing name suddenly makes perfect sense. 





Fisherman Christian Canul. LEFT The main beach at Punta Allen



## Essentials



**Serenidad Shardon** Stay in one of three charming, thatched-roofed casitas (sleeping eight, four and two) spread across the white sands of a beachfront property a short walk from the town centre. Enlivened by local artwork and nautical flourishes, the properties are equipped with loungers, hammocks and self-catering facilities. Owner Niki serves coffee and pastries in the mornings at the open-air breakfast bar, in the shade of a sprawling almond tree popular with mocking birds (from US\$139; shardon.com).

📍 **Sian Ka'an Biosphere** ([cesiak.org](http://cesiak.org)); **Christian Canul** can be contacted to arrange guided tours through Serenidad Shardon ([shardon.com](http://shardon.com)).

A view out to sea from the Serenidad Shardon casitas. ABOVE Flamingos in the mangrove channel

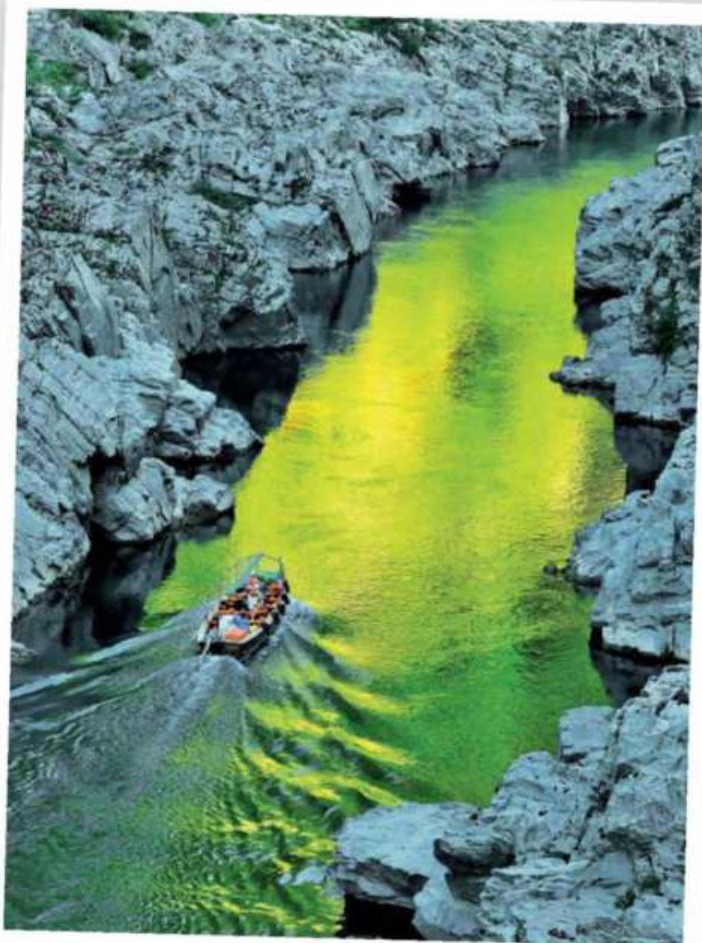




# Romance of the Four Kingdoms

Although the smallest of the Japan's four main islands, Shikoku's famed 88 Temple Pilgrimage route and untempered natural beauty make it a haven for those seeking a path to spiritual and physical enlightenment

WORDS MELISSA LORRAINE CHUA



**I**F YOU FIND YOURSELF CROSSING A BRIDGE in one of the temples in Shikoku, be careful not to tap your walking stick on it. No, not because there's a troll underneath and you're a billy goat Gruff, but because bridges are where the venerable Kōbō Daishi is rumoured to rest his head. Born in 774 in Shikoku's Sanuki Province (present-day Kagawa Prefecture), the legendary Buddhist monk is revered as the most significant patriarch of Shingon Buddhism in Japan, and the original founder of the Shikoku pilgrimage route.

With a name that translates literally to mean “four provinces”, the four prefectures of Shikoku – Tokushima, Ehime, Kochi and Kagawa – while uniquely distinct, all offer refreshingly sweet waters, lush virgin forests, and warm hospitality. The only island of Japan without any volcanoes, Shikoku's terrain has traditionally been used to cultivate a variety of citrus fruits and wheat, the significance of the former evident in the use of *mikan* (mandarin) and *sudachi* (lime) as the prefectural mascots for Ehime and Tokushima respectively (Kagawa's mascot has noodles for brains, but we'll get to that later). Unlike the more cosmopolitan cities in Japan that have a tendency to make you feel hemmed in or overly hassled, Shikoku's heart beats to a mellower drum, promising historical castles and storybook gardens, amazing regional cuisine, and intimate local encounters.









## EHIME

Matsuyama is the largest city in Shikoku and the capital of Ehime prefecture. No one seems to know exactly why it was historically chosen as the gathering point for the ancient lords of the island, but I have a strong inkling that it had something to do with the landmark **Dōgo Onsen** (1-7 Dōgomachi, Matsuyama), the oldest hot spring in Japan – after all, what better way to end the day than simmering in a mineral broth alongside your fellow naked comrades? Although the hot spring itself is over 3,000 years old, the bath house was only built in 1895. Portions of the bath house are scheduled to close for earthquake resistance construction starting autumn 2017, so it's a good idea to visit as soon as possible to get the full Dōgo Onsen experience.

Second on the list of most popular spots in Ehime is the imperial **Matsuyama Castle** (1 Marunouchi, Matsuyama; tel: +81 89-921-4873), curiously located right in the heart of the modern city – amidst steel and glass, a cable car ride transports you to a piece of history where visitors are greeted by an uncharacteristically cheerful and adorable samurai at the castle's entrance. Climbing the various towers feels like being on set of a period war drama (watch out for strategically placed holes in the walls and floor where soldiers would unleash arrows, spears, rocks, and even boiling oil upon invaders), but conquer the steep narrow stairwells and you will be rewarded with unparalleled views of the city and the sea beyond.

Not to be missed when dining in Ehime

is the famed Goshiki restaurant (3-5-4 Sanban-chō, Matsuyama; tel: +81 89-933-3838) located next to the Matsuyama Chuo (Central) Post Office. Specialising in cold somen noodles – look out for the colourful curtains of dry noodles hanging from the ceiling as you enter – Goshiki offers set meals at around ¥1,500 with seasonal side dishes, including a mini rice bowl topped with sea bream called *taimeshi*, a regional specialty.

Venture out of central Matsuyama and you will enter the Moomin wonderland of **ICHIHIRO Towel Museum** (799-1607 2930 Asakurakamiko, Imabari; tel: +81 89-856-1515) – die-hard fans of this cheeky comic character will absolutely adore the outdoor garden complete with perfectly manicured landscapes and Moomin-shaped hedges. Otherwise, the indoor exhibits are equally fascinating – expect large character figures sculpted from towels, colourful towel

murals of The Moomins' exciting adventures, and unique product memorabilia on display.

Just 40 kilometres southwest of Matsuyama is the historical town of **Uchiko** (town.uchiko.ehime.jp), the last vestige of the region's prosperous history as a centre of wax and paper production. A stroll down the streets of Yokaichi Old Town will have you transported back in time to over a century ago when the city boomed along with its wax trade. Visit the massive Kamihaga Residence (which belonged to the town's premier trading family) and see how the rich truly lived – the landmark home took over 10 years to complete with private garden, a sprawling backyard, and expansive kitchen and servants' quarters. Smaller homes have mostly been converted into shop fronts, helmed by families fighting to keep the art of traditional wood-carving, basket-weaving, and candle-making alive.



PHOTOGRAPHS: HIDEYUKI KAWON, EHIME TOURISM



## KOCHI

Fed by the pristine waters of the **Shimanto River**, the rice grown in Kochi is exceptionally sweet, which translates particularly well into its sakes. Local brewer Yoshikazu Yabe runs a humble brewery in Nakamura called Fujimusume Shuzo, which churns out small-batch premium sakes that are deliciously silky and fragrant; Yabe avoids mechanisation of the process as much as possible to retain the purity of the rice and the quality of the sake. The river's rich natural environment also delivers a steady supply of delicious eel and ayu, a type of local sweetfish; Yakatabune Nattoku organises cruises along the Shimanto River and offers delicious lunch sets featuring both these local delicacies.

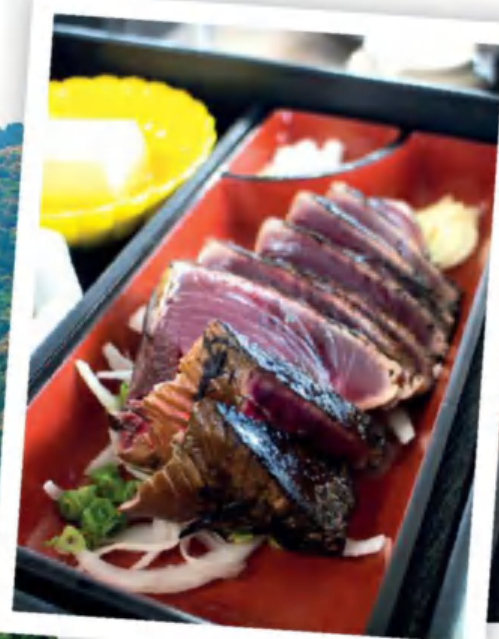
In fact, two of the best things to do in Kochi is to eat and drink – and by drink, we mean alcohol. Notorious for their brutal drinking games and rowdy social mixers, the people of Kochi have big livers and an even bigger personality. **Hirome Market** (2-3-1 Obiyamachi, Kochi; +81 88-822-5287) is a huge maze of food and souvenir stalls catering to both locals and tourists alike, operating by the same rules as a food court. Grab your seat and weave your way through Japanese, Western, Chinese, and even Indian food stalls dishing out lots of piping hot food to go with a plethora of Japanese beers on tap.

PHOTOGRAPH: KOCHITOURISM

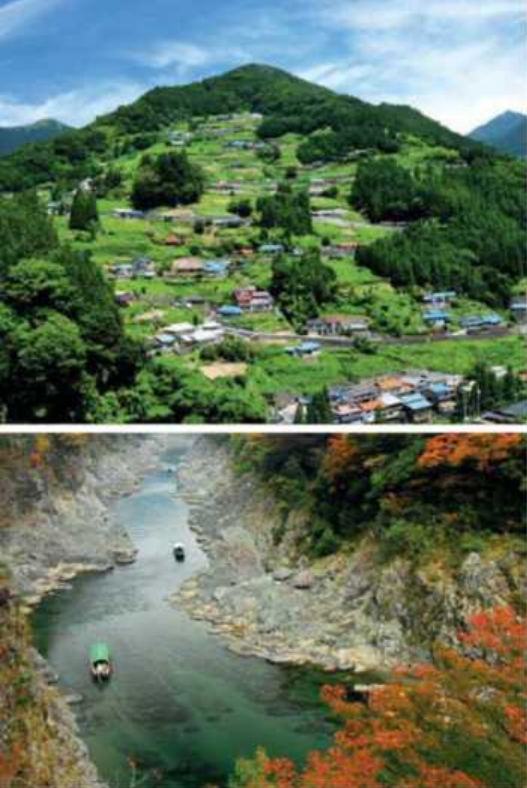


One of the most popular dishes in Kochi is *tataki*, flame roasted bonito steak, but for a truly hands-on experience you will have to head to **Tosa Tataki Dojo** (201-2 Niida, Kochi; tel: +81 88-847-3255). This massive two-storeyed boat-shaped restaurant lets you torch your meal over flaming straw for a freshly charred meal that requires minimal seasoning – just sprinkle on some sea salt, fresh garlic and spring onion and you're good to go. This unparalleled dining experience comes at a mere ¥1,300, just beware not to scorch your eyebrows off in the process. For desserts, get your hands on some *Manten-no-hoshi Daifuku*, a *mochi*-like treat filled with fresh cream and *hojicha*.

**QRAUD** (1226 Kashiki, Ino, Agawa District; tel: +81 88-892-1117) just off the highway about 40 minutes from Kochi central city is a great place to stop by for some local crafts. Be sure to try your hand at traditional Tosa Washi paper-making (¥400 - ¥600) for some truly one-of-a-kind souvenirs. Pulp is sifted and lifted through wooden frames before being decorated with flowers and paper confetti, and subsequently flattened and express dried on a heated drum to be turned into a set of colourful "Collector's Edition" postcards.







## TOKUSHIMA

Tokushima is a fascinating juxtaposition of modern international grandeur and remote traditional villages – while it is blessed with natural beauties such as the Oboke Gorge and massive whirlpools across the Naruto Straits, it is also home to the world's largest collection of 'reconstructed' art and a small cluster of refurbished traditional thatched roof houses perched atop a steep mountain slope.

While not for the faint of heart, crossing the **Iya Kazura** vine bridge is one of the most iconic pit stops in Tokushima. Rumoured to have been designed for quick getaways when necessary (one need simply chop off one end of the bridge to flee persecutors), these vine bridges are architectural marvels of thickly-roped mountain vines. Today, only three of the original 13 bridges remain, and have been reinforced with steel cables for safety.



Veiled in morning mist and delightfully inaccessible by larger vehicles and tourist swarms, **Tougenkyo-Iya** ([tougenkyo-iy.jp](http://tougenkyo-iy.jp)) on the slopes of Iya Mountain is indubitably one of the world's most unique lodgings. Spearheaded by Maryland-born Alex Kerr in one of the most remote corners of Tokushima, this small collective of meticulously refurbished traditional thatched roof houses is a snapshot of mountain life, frozen in time. Luckily, it also comes outfitted with a host of modern comforts and amenities for the spoilt urbanite in me, including spacious bathrooms, induction heating, and life-saving wireless internet connection.

Tokushima is also home to one of the most famous dance festivals in Japan – **Awa Odori**, a massive community event that sees streets filled with thousands of dancers decked in colourful costumes to the beat of traditional string and



percussion beat. Awa Odori is also nicknamed the Fool's Dance, as inspired by a folk song whose lyrics go, "Fools dance and fools watch, if both are fools, you might as well dance", a wise adage if I ever heard one. While the festival runs annually between 12 to 15 August, those who visit off-season can still experience the dance at the Awa Odori Kaikan (2-20 Shinmachibashi, Tokushima; tel: +81 88-611-1611) where there are multiple performances a day. Just be prepared to get up on stage to participate.

From the mountains to the sea, Tokushima's **Otsuka Museum of Art** (Naruto Park, Tokushima 772-0053; tel: +81 88-687-3737; ¥3,240 per adult) houses the world's most complete collection of full-scale replica artworks under one roof – imagine travelling from the Sistine Chapel to the Scrovegni Chapel to Pompeii in one fell swoop! What started out as a 75th anniversary project by the Otsuka Pharmaceutical Group has turned into a massive undertaking that today houses over 1,000 Western masterpieces from over 25 countries, and has become a beacon of international exchange for history and art lovers alike.

Tokushima ramen is a unique version of this popular noodle dish come with a dark shoyu-based broth and replaces the traditional chashu with pork rib slices, topped with raw egg yolk for added richness. One of the most popular outlets in the city is Inotani (4-25 Nishidaikumachi, Tokushima; closed Mondays) but be prepared to stand and wait.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROSINO, TOKUSHIMA TOURISM, OTSUKA MUSEUM OF ART



## KAGAWA

While it may be the smallest of all the prefectures in Japan, Kagawa is no less colourful (and flavourful). Famed for its springy and clean-tasting Sanuki udon noodles, Kagawa's udon craze extends even to soft serve flavours. Yes, udon-flavoured ice cream. With udon constantly on their mind, it seems befitting that the prefectural mascot has a bowl for a head and noodles for brains.

While there are a multitude of restaurants serving various styles of Sanuki udon, **Nakano Udon School** (796 Kotohira-cho, Nakatado-gun; tel: +81 877-75-0001) will work up your appetite with an udon-making class that will see you pounding, stomping, and dancing on your udon dough – the sensei plays Village People and taps a tambourine as he cheers you on.

Work off your meal with a climb up to **Konpirasan**, also known as Kotohira-gū, the main of multiple Konpira shrines across Japan that are dedicated to seafarers. Be fairly warned that you will need to conquer a daunting 1,368 stone steps to the top, but the feeling of accomplishment at the top will be worth it. Next to the main hall is a counter selling various lucky charms and amulets – I chose to donate a

token amount to the shrine's puppy in exchange for a fortune.

While in the prefectural capital of Takamatsu (where you can catch a ferry to Naoshima Island) be sure to take a walk through **Ritsurin Garden** (1-20-16 Ritsurincho, Takamatsu; tel: +81 87-833-7411), a beautiful collection of historic trees and ponds built by the feudal lords of the Edo period. Go early to grab a traditional porridge breakfast in one of the lakeside pavilions, which comes accompanied by pickled plums picked from trees in the garden. Take a rest in the Kikugetsu Tea House overlooking the gorgeous pond, and make a stop at the historical pine tree that was planted in 1903 by the Emperor Taishō.

The ferry to **Naoshima Island** ([www.benesse-artsite.jp](http://www.benesse-artsite.jp)) is incredibly spacious and modern, with air-conditioned interior, sofa seats circling coffee tables, and a lower-deck carrier compartment for tour buses and personal cars (¥520/adult, ¥260/child). Naoshima itself is a heaven for modern art lovers, with multiple museums and installation pieces scattered across the island. Chichu Art Museum, Benesse House and the Lee Ufan Museum house a great selection of art (most of which are of the tilt-your-head-to-appreciate-it variety), and many of these buildings were designed by

renowned Japanese architect Ando Tadao. The Art House Project is a particularly fascinating collection of art installations depicting different themes, from the magic of light to the beauty of time. Refuel at the Café Salon Naka-Oku ([www.naka-oku.com](http://www.naka-oku.com)), which serves a mean omelette curry rice and a local olive soda, or grab a cake and coffee before heading off to explore the rest of the island. ☺





## Make it Happen

### Essentials



#### GETTING THERE

Although lacking a full international airport, Shikoku has four regional airports (one in each prefecture) that can be accessed via Tokyo and other major cities including Osaka and Nagoya. Fly direct from Singapore to Tokyo's Haneda Airport on Singapore Airlines or All Nippon Airways (from US\$664; [ana.co.jp](http://ana.co.jp)), or from Kuala Lumpur on AirAsia (from US\$396; [airasia.com](http://airasia.com)), and transfer onto a domestic Japan Airlines or All Nippon Airways flight to your prefecture of choice.

#### GETTING AROUND

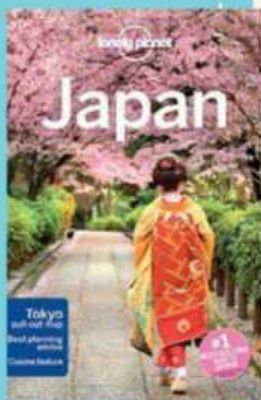
Self-drive trips are extremely popular in Shikoku, and car rental services are available near airports for you to pick-up and return your vehicle. Alternatively, the Shikoku Railway Company (JR Shikoku) also operates multiple lines that connect most of the major cities on the island.

#### TOUR OPERATOR

H.I.S. offers self-drive itineraries for Shikoku starting from US\$1,104 which includes plane tickets, car rental, and accommodation ([destination-japan.com](http://destination-japan.com)).

#### FURTHER INFO

*Lonely Planet Japan* (US\$29.99) has a chapter on Shikoku, which is also available for download at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com) (US\$4.95). Visit [tourismshikoku.org](http://tourismshikoku.org) for more comprehensive information including maps and suggested itineraries.



#### THE SHIKOKU 88 TEMPLE PILGRIMAGE

The route extends 1,200 kilometres across all four prefectures. Hundreds of *henro* (pilgrims) attempt the route every year for a variety of ascetic and leisure-related purposes; many have found it an invaluable opportunity for quiet reflection, spiritual rejuvenation, and self-discovery.

Pilgrims must come armed with the following: a white vest; a *wasega* (stole) that comes in various colours to be worn around your neck; a rosary for you to recite your prayers; a stack of *osamefuda* (nameslips) with your personal details and wishes written down; and a stampbook for collecting signatures as proof of your visit to each temple.

A completion of the route 10 times will earn you a red talisman, while 50 times will



earn you a gold one. For the rare and tenacious few who complete the route 100 times, a special brocaded talisman is your trophy – in addition to the personal and spiritual satisfaction, of course.

While traditionally travelled by foot, the modern *henro* now has the option to bus, bike, and drive their way across all 88 pit stops. It is estimated that the entire route will take 10–12 days drive, or 40–50 days on foot.

#### No. 1: Ryozenji Temple

The starting point of the Shikoku Pilgrimage is in Tokushima. Be sure to pick up all the gear you need, and a guide to walking the trail which is available in English for around ¥1,600.

#### No. 31: Chikurinji Temple

Famous for its beautiful gardens constructed by a Zen priest in 1318, this Kochi landmark also houses a Treasure Building that safeguards a collection of ancient Buddhist statues dating back as early as the 9th century.

#### No. 51: Ishiteji Temple

In Ehime, Ishiteji allows visitors to make a 'short cut' – a hidden cave houses 88 statuettes, one from every temple. Worshippers can go down the line to deposit their *osamefuda* and offerings at each statuette,



akin to paying a personal visit to their respective temples!

**No. 75: Zentsuji Temple** is the birthplace of Kobo Daishi. Together with Toji Temple in Kyoto and Mt. Koya in Wakayama, this temple is noted as one of the three holy sites linked to Kobo Daishi.



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# LIFE'S LESSONS THROUGH THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

What does it take to be a Navy SEAL? Simon Tan puts his resolve to the test in an intense three-day mission to uncover the answer

Oftentimes, we sit in our cozy chairs and wonder why would people subject their bodies to masochistic pursuits just to prove their mettle and steel. After finishing my National Service more than 30 years' ago, I had occasionally indulged in my illusion of wanting to be a competitive triathlete and marathon runner just to prove my virility and masculinity. Inevitably, our knees give way and bodies protest with age. I realized that such physical endeavours are better reminisced as a paean to our glorious youth through the rear view mirror of our lives.

When I was given a chance by Luminox to experience first hand what Navy SEAL training is like, I demurred. After all, I have nothing to prove and age is a great redeemer. However, when I was told it would be in languid Berjaya Langkawi Resort, my mouth crested into a smile and I thought to myself, "How tough can it be?" I accepted the experience to be put through the paces.

When we arrived in Langkawi on a hazy September afternoon, courtesy of the blanket smog from burning rainforests in Indonesia covering the entire region, the 37 of us were told to change into our T-shirt and black shorts and get ready for some team bonding exercises. It was a motley crew of participants: mainly young,



Ex-Navy SEAL, John McGuire briefs a motley crew of 36 "wannabe SEAL" participants from Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, with ages ranging from 25 to 54 and with varying fitness levels and abilities



with an equal gender mix, largely sedentary types who are more adept at typing at breakneck speeds than breasting the finishing tape, one with work shoes on rather than trainers and many with a burgeoning waistline. I felt safe.

John McGuire was our trainer. A former Navy SEAL (an acronym for Sea, Air and Land), he briefed us in an air-conditioned room on the hallmarks and attributes of a Navy SEAL. He is a relatively small man for an American Navy Specialist. He inspired us by sharing that he made the grade in spite of his lack of stature and he did so through his grit, discipline and determination to persevere when others falter. Eventually, he could do 20 pull ups using his index fingers. Quite a feat! Yet, to be a Navy SEAL, you do not act alone. A pre-requisite is that a SEAL must be a team player with the “never say die, never leave any one behind and all for one, one for all” mantra. John was very swashbuckling, very Musketeer, very GI Joe. And every pronouncement of agreement or affirmation of instructions received is greeted with a resounding “*Hooyah!*” in unison, loud enough to rock the coconut trees outside.

It was then that I started to get cold feet. I spoke to John about my torn meniscus in my knee. He assured me that his exercises are tailored for everyone with varying levels of fitness and abilities. With my dodgy knee, he just exhorted me to do what I can.

There was no knife or fancy equipment handed to us, only a Luminox watch with

a plain dial and micro gas tubes as hands to see in the dark. After synchronizing our time, we trudged to the beach for a sample of what Navy Seals go through at the 24-week BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) at the US Naval Special Warfare Training Centre in Coronado, CA.

I really cannot recall the sequence of exercises. I was just in too much pain to recollect. However, the premise of the exercises is simple: when John communicates his instructions, all of us were expected to carry them out, make sure others do likewise and ensure that no one strays behind. How’s that for a summary?

There were a few warm ups involving the entire group. Running from one point to another, kneeling down (ouch!), listening to instructions and executing

Truth be told, there were fit guys and girls, but a battle, sortie or war is not always won by the fittest or strongest – it is won by those who fight as one, who don’t break rank and who look out for their fellow team mates.

And boy, was it chaotic! Orders repeated downstream by others were garbled and truncated, simple instructions were misconstrued and stronger ones complete the tasks ahead of the weaker ones. All of us were not working as one. It got better along the way and soon simple tasks were done faster, neater and in a more orderly fashion, but it was an uphill battle to get there.

The big cohort was soon broken up, after some fell out, into smaller groups and the



Warm-up exercises involving the entire group – running from one point to another, rolling in the sand and kneeling down (ouch!)

‘fittest’ 5 over a few tasks were made leaders. I was one of them only by virtue of my ability to avoid colliding into someone running in the opposite direction or into my path. John took us aside and communicated his instructions to us and we were to let our teammates know what the task entailed.

**“Run to the edge of the sea, touch the water and tag the next guy or gal”**



PHOTOGRAPHS: HEZERI SAMSURI, CHERYL TAY





For many of us, we are not used to dirt, pain and hardship. I was worried about my sunglasses, sand in my ear and underwear but not focused on the task. Only way to acquit ourselves was to help each other

“Run to the edge of the sea, touch the water and tag the next guy or gal. When the last member crosses the finish line where I stand, do a roll call and then shout “*Hooyah!*”. After completing this task, the soles of my shoes gave way and my mouth was filled with sand kicked up by others. Before I could catch my breath, John signaled with his hand for the leaders to assemble around him.

“Crawl on all fours to the edge of the water with chest to the sand. Touch the water and run back to tag the next. When all members finish, do a roll call and shout “*Hooyah!*”. This was when the lactic acid build-up started to kick in. It did not help that the coarse sand shaved skin off my elbows and knees. The impulse to cheat was insurmountable. Yet, in your heart of hearts, you do not want to cheat. What example are you setting? Who are you cheating but yourself? What sort of prize would there be?



Tackling the daunting task of “Sand Crawl”



“Same task again but this time, cover yourself with sand when you cross the finishing line!” First time round, we did as told. But John found it unacceptable. For many of us, we are not used to dirt, pain and hardship. I was worried about my sunglasses, sand in my ear and underwear. I was more focused on doing the task without doing it well. John barked, “Only way to acquit yourself as a leader is to help your other teammates. Finish your task and then encourage the rest. Cover him or her with sand if need be.” I did as I was told and covered my teammates with sand, lots of it. I rolled them on the sand until they looked like sugar-crusted cinnamon rolls. There were tasks with objectives and rules to be followed. But the rules also allowed the strong to help the weaker.

This was more than I bargained for. The old group was broken up and a new one was formed. Body weight was used to form the grouping. I was grouped with 3 of the fittest guys, all in the prime of their lives. Taller, fitter and stronger than me, we finished our tasks with speed and efficiency. Many of these tasks involved carrying one person



“Crawl on all fours to the edge of the water with chest to the sand. Touch the water and run back to tag the next.”



safely to a point and then the next, until all of us had taken turns in being carried. Yet, for all our strength and speed, we finished last for one of the tasks. When told to do 100 sits up with all 4 members in our group, we did 100 each when others did 25 each! Somehow, in our bid to be fast, we may have missed the vital piece of instruction that would have meant completing the task first.

And so we learnt teamwork, proper communications and cooperation. If there is a breakdown in communications and a failure by one to deliver, the whole team is let down. Still, when everyone was in pain, it somehow became easier to bear. The camaraderie became more important than individual glory. No one can complete the task on his or her own unless you are Rambo. As a team, you are only as strong as the weakest link.

Throughout it all, I paid little heed to the things that I often took for granted. The Luminox watch on my wrist that showed me time during the night reconnaissance and orientation exercise, the hardiness and simplicity in its use became an appeal to me. I was just too tired to fiddle with dials and buttons. It did what it was supposed to do. Little wonder it is an essential tool for the Navy SEALs.

Nothing else mattered in life. The many trappings that we covet do not save you in




**A new grouping determined by body weight, involving the group carrying one person safely to a point and then the next, until all had been carried. Yet, for all our efficiency and strength, we finished last for one of the tasks. When told to do 100 sits up with all 4 members in our group, we did 100 each when others did 25 per member!**

adversity. It can buy you favours and indulgences, but when it comes to overcoming obstacles and achieving objectives, all things being equal, one has



**If you are part of a team, a willingness to listen and communicate is essential to meet life's problems**

to rely on character, fortitude and perseverance. And if you are part of a team, a willingness to listen and communicate is important to meet life's problems. 



**The Luminox watch on my wrist that showed me time during the night reconnaissance and orientation exercise**







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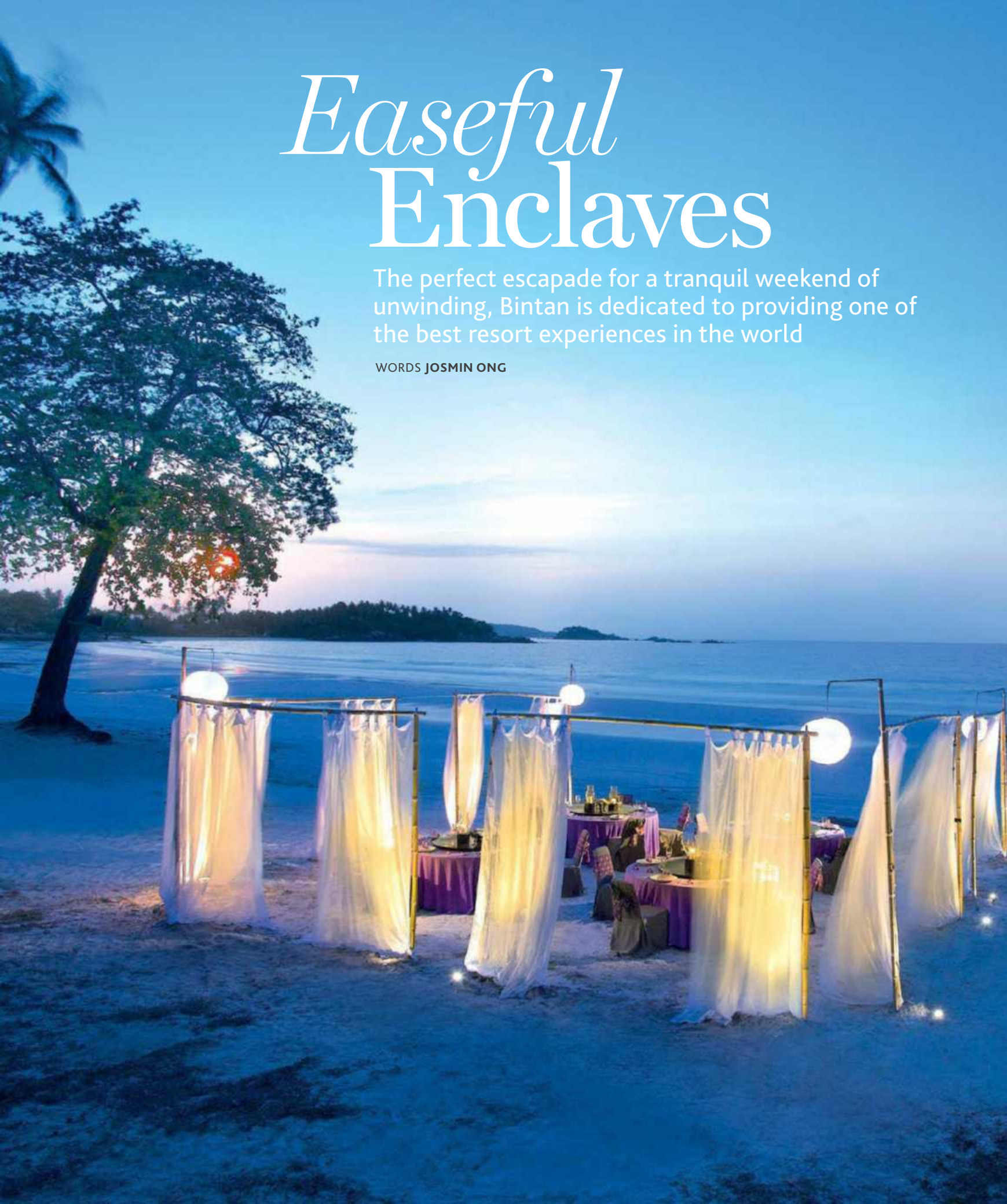
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WORDS JOSMIN ONG





# Laguna Bintan

Laguna Bintan is an area comprising of top resorts such as Angsana, Banyan Tree with facilities such as Laguna Bintan Golf Club.



## Best for Tranquil Escapes Banyan Tree Bintan

**1** Jalan Teluk Berembang, Laguna Bintan, Lagoi 29155, Indonesia; tel: +62 770 693 100

Having received over 1,000 awards and accolades since it was founded in 1994, Banyan Tree Bintan is the epitome of tropical retreat living and promises nothing but the best form of service and experience to all visitors. Located in the northwestern tip of Bintan Island, the resort offers an exclusive villa lifestyle amidst the mystic charm of its natural surroundings. The welcoming resort comprises 64 traditional Balinese-styled lush villas perched on a promontory. The resort was recently refurbished in 2013 to maintain standards and include new relaxation pools. Golf lovers will be glad to know that an 18-hole golf course designed by Greg Norman is available within walking distance from the resort. The Laguna Bintan Golf Club offers an exhilarating golfing experience to both novice and seasoned golfers.

**TOP DRAW:** Gourmet lovers can look forward to the wide array of international cuisines situated in different dining facilities. Saffron

offers innovative Thai cuisine while The Cove provides contemporary Mediterranean-style cuisine. Pair a relaxing massage session with healthy Asian fine dining delicacies at Massage of the Senses for an unforgettable and truly invigorating experience.

**NEARBY:** Banyan Tree Spa provides an extensive range of body massage and beauty treatments for a rejuvenating stay. Some signature therapies include the Royal Banyan, Javanese Lulur, Balinese Boreh and Restful Balance, with each having its own distinct advantages for health, mind and body. Take the opportunity to explore the Banyan Tree Gallery, a lifestyle gallery showcasing indigenous art and craft.

**PRICE:** From USD\$396 per night



## Best for Family Fun Angsana Bintan

**1** Angsana Bintan, Jalan Teluk, Berembang, Laguna Bintan, Lagoi 29155, Indonesia; tel: +62 770 693 111

Nestled on the beautiful white sands of Tanjung Said Bay, Angsana Bintan overlooks the majestic South China Sea, allowing a true tranquil island experience for guests. Each of the 113 rooms and suites are designed with local influences and comes with an astonishing view of the sea. Fine detailing can be seen in the rooms designed with tropical leaf motifs and alang-alang features. The Angsana Suite is ideal for large private groups or families, and includes a landscaped garden and outdoor jet pool. Exclusive family deals are also available, such as children below the age of 12 being able to dine for free while parents get a refreshing massage and spa treatment. Water sport activities such as kayaking, body boarding, surfing and snorkelling are also available.

**TOP DRAW:** Children can join the Kids Club and meet new playmates while passing time with interactive activities. For the adults, trek through the rainforests of Bintan with the Gunung Bintan Adventure Trek and challenge the 340-metre high mountain or join the award-winning Mangrove Discovery Day and Night Fireflies Tour.

**NEARBY:** Hop on an Indonesian fishing boat and reel in an exciting array of catch fresh from the sea. Chefs will then cook up a storm for families and friends to enjoy the local delicacies. Visit Tanjung Uban, a quaint seaside fishing village, to add on to the authentic Indonesian experience for a true reflection of the daily lives of locals.

**PRICE:** From US\$190 per night





## Lagoi Bay

Set to be the new 'Heart of Bintan', Lagoi Bay is one of the new developments that will encompass holiday resorts together with residential villas, countless options of outdoor activities and shopping. Lagoi Beach Village will include Bintan Marketplace and Plaza Lagoi, where travellers are able to eat to their hearts content at the F&B outlets or shop for souvenirs.

## Best for Splendor Seekers

### The Sanchaya

**📍 Jalan Gurindam Duabelas, Plot 5, Lagoi Bay; tel: +62 770 692 200**

Despite having only opened in January 2015, The Sanchaya was included in the Condé Nast Traveler Hot List of "Best New Hotels in the World" for 2015. The Sanchaya is a luxurious beachfront estate located in Lagoi Bay, the newly launched development in Bintan. Be whisked away into the bygone era through the historical presence in the resort. Guests will be able to seek peace and rejuvenation in this colonial estate comprising a unique collection of 21 villas and 9 suites. Each villa and suite is designed differently and inspired by the rich colours, flavours, sights and sounds of South East Asian culture. The collectible art and furnishing pieces were carefully selected and harmoniously matched with each room's interior style. Aside from the exquisite accommodation, the creative cuisines and unique culinary offerings are enough reason to visit and return to. This gourmet paradise is home to three dining experiences, The Dining Room, Tasanee Grill, which serves Bangkok street cuisine, and The Salon & Library.

**TOP DRAW:** Guests can choose from a selection of highly personalised services during their stay at The Sanchaya. Find bed and bath linens provided by Bed Linen, Bed Scape and Bath Scape by Ploh, a high quality luxury and feather bedding supplier. Four exquisite bathing experiences are available on the bath menu, including The Sanchaya Indulgence that uses a signature fragrance and is served with canapés and single Malt whiskey.

**NEARBY:** The Sanchaya Yacht, a Cranchi 54 Fly, can be hired for private transfers from Singapore to Bintan or used as a charter and sunset cruise for full or half day charters. Take off from Lake Lagoi, located in front of The Sanchaya Estate, on an ultralight amphibious open cockpit seaplane and discover north Bintan from a bird eye's view.

**PRICE:** From US\$560 per night



PHOTOGRAPHS: THE SANCHAYA





## Nirwana Gardens

Be prepared to be spoilt for choices upon entering Nirwana Gardens. There are plenty of accommodations within this area, from rustic cottages to private luxury pool villas, definitely something suitable for everyone. Aside from that, there are also numerous facilities suitable for business meetings and company retreats. True to its name of “perfect bliss”, Nirwana Gardens is the one-stop hub for all to gather, shop, dine and be entertained.

PHOTOGRAPHS: NIRWANA RESORT HOTEL

### Best for Joyful Epicureans Nirwana Resort Hotel

**📍 Jalan Panglima Pantar, Lagoi, Bintan, Indonesia; tel: +62 770 692505**

This sun-kissed paradise on Earth is a unique blend of sunny Mediterranean spirit and warm Indonesian hospitality that will ensure guests a welcoming and relaxing stay. The hotel is home to 245 guestrooms, with a choice of Superior, Deluxe Premier or Suite Rooms. Every room has an amazing view of either the endless sea, gorgeous swimming pool or the well-groomed gardens. Bring out the adventurer in you and fill the days with exhilarating activities such as a ride into the forest on the All-Terrain-Vehicle, dune buggy or trekking. If you prefer a less active option, go on a heritage tour around the rest of Bintan Island and try your hand at some local handicrafts and batik.

**TOP DRAW:** The ensemble of restaurants and bars will definitely satisfy the most discerning taste buds. Some of the 12 wine & dine options

include The Poolside, The Coffee Shop, The Kelong Seafood Restaurant, Calypso Floating Bar, The Pub, Spice Restaurant, Rin Japanese Restaurant, Pool Bar, La Luna Restaurant & Beach Bar and Dino Bistro. Authentic Thai cuisines are also offered at Baan Aarya Thai Restaurant, where it is set within a cosy and charming Asian pavilion.

**NEARBY:** Take a tour around the Resort on buggies and take a pit stop at the Mini Zoo – a sanctuary for resident wildlife; different species of exotic birds, white crocodiles, soft-shelled turtles, pythons and alligator-fish.

**PRICE:** From US\$93 per night





# Treasure Bay

This newly developed area is poised to become the region's most iconic premier waterfront resort city and leading leisure destination. One of the key features will include the Crystal Lagoon, South East Asia's first and largest recreational sea-water body, used for an array of recreational and interactive activities suitable for all ages.



## Best for Avid Explorers The Canopi

**1** **Jl. Raya Haji Km 01, Lagoi, Desa Seborg Lagoi, Kecamatan, Teluk Seborg, Kepulauan Riau; tel: +62 (0) 813 7103 9091**

Thrill seeking adventurers will love the idea of "Glamping" – a glamorous camping experience nestled within the lush greenery and forestry of Bintan. What better way to explore and get close to Mother Nature than to relish in the beauty of it. The 40-Tent Suite resort situated in the 338ha Treasure Bay adventure ground - including a private mangrove river, a 6.3ha salt water Crystal Lagoon, is built to suit the needs of modern and sophisticated travellers. These Safari Tent-suites are equipped with air-conditioning and exclusive comforts such as LCD television, outdoor private Jacuzzis, personal BBQ pits, sisal carpets and Wi-Fi. A private garden is situated next to the suite where guests are able to rest and relax in a hammock while star-gazing the night away.

**TOP DRAW:** Nature lovers and adventure enthusiasts will be elated with the endless list of



activities available on site. Guided ATV jungle tours and jetski safari mangrove tours are available for those who wish to learn and play concurrently. Others can opt to play in the inflatable waterpark, the first in Asia, or rent water guns and battle it out in the man-made Crystal Lagoon.

**NEARBY:** Chill Cove is a designated spot to celebrate the beach lifestyle with F&B outlets, entertainment and leisure offerings. After a long day of adventures, have a private BBQ served by your own personal butler or join in the fun at the Bora Bora Beach Bar for groovy jazz and cool beach tunes.

**PRICE:** From US\$140 per night

## Best for Expansive Explorers Bintan Lagoon Resort

**1** **Bintan Lagoon Resort, Jalan Indera Segara Site A12, Lagoi, Teluk Seborg, Bintan, Kepri 29155, Indonesia; tel: +62 770 691 388**

Set amongst 310 hectares of beachfront gardens overlooking the South China Sea, Bintan Lagoon Resort (BLR) prides itself as the largest and longest operating resort on the island and is the only resort on the island with its own ferry terminal and direct ferry service. From Singapore, it takes a quick 90-minute ferry ride to reach the resort. Leisure seekers will be pleased to know that the resort offers up to 50 different activities for both water and land sports. Make a splash and ride the waves while jet-skiing or take a donut boat by the Pasir Panjang Beach for a high adrenaline rush.



PHOTOGRAPHS: THE CANOPI, CLUB MED BINTAN ISLAND; BINTAN LAGOON RESORT





If you prefer to stay dry but still have a love for speed, try the all-terrain vehicle ride for an afternoon of fun as you manoeuvre through the jungle. Bintan Lagoon Resort is also home to two highly-acclaimed 18-hole golf courses designed by Jack Nicklaus and Ian Baker-Finch.

**TOP DRAW:** With extensive meeting facilities and a variety of outdoor locations, BLR offers the perfect setting for MICE events. There are eight function rooms within the main resort building and clubhouse, as well as The Great Hall that can hold up to

1300 standing guests. Engage in productive meeting or corporate team building activities and indulge yourselves at The Kedaton Spa for a full body relaxation spa treatment & massage, using organic ingredients coupled with modern techniques and traditional therapies that help guests to rest and rejuvenate before heading back home.

**NEARBY:** With all the amenities available within the resort, head out for a day of eye-opening experience at Tanjung Pinang, the capital of Bintan. Tuck into an authentic local meal at the shophouse restaurants or take a boat out into the water villages to gain insightful knowledge and meet the people of Bintan Island.

**PRICE:** From US\$85 per night



## Ria Bintan

### Best for Energetic Globetrotters

#### Club Med Bintan Island

**Site A11, Lagoi, Bintan Island;**  
**tel: +62 770 692 801**

Club Med Bintan Island boasts a 4-Trident rating and showcases the best of Club Med's new upscale positioning. The resort is set upon one of the most beautiful beaches on the island and the sandy white beaches are perfect for an afternoon of tanning session or simply taking a ton of photos for memorabilia purposes. A hassle-free vacation is promised at every stay as this is an all-inclusive resort ideal for countless hours of fun for family and friends alike. Parents can rest easy at Club Med Bintan Island, knowing that their wards are safely supervised and entertained by trained G.Os (Gentil Organisateur). Mini Club Med is a signature children clubs specifically catered to children aged 4 to 10 years old, where they can enjoy making new discoveries and experiences during their time at the resort. While the children are well taken care of, indulge in Club Med Spa by Asmara for an hour or two of rest and rejuvenation.

**TOP DRAW:** Guests have the freedom to do

whatever they want on their holiday without having to worry about excessive charges. Existing sports and recreational facilities include archery, yoga, windsurfing and snorkelling. Club Med also offers swimming and fitness facilities coupled with its own private beach for relaxation purposes.

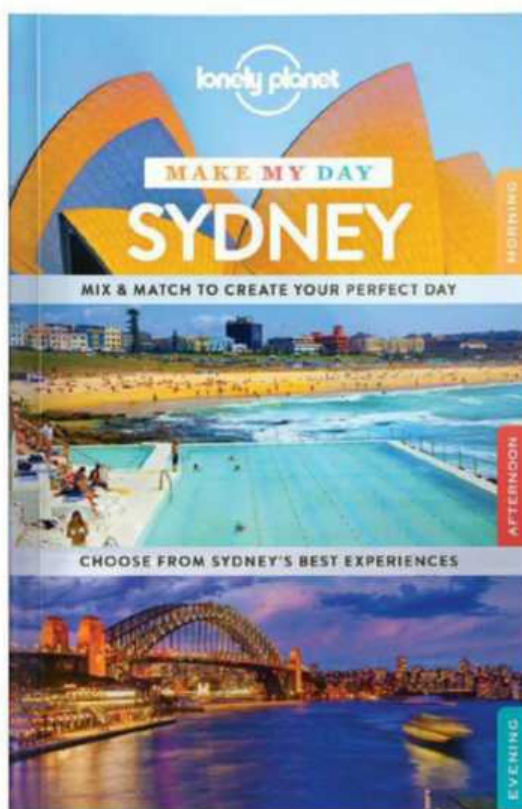
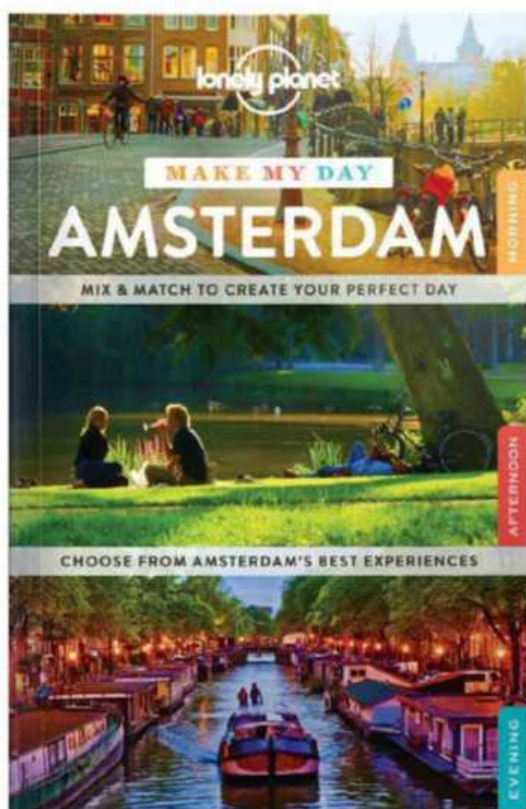
**NEARBY:** Golf lovers will be pleased with the presence of Gary Player Ocean & Forest Course situated nearby the resort at Ria Bintan Golf Club. The 27-hole championship golf course features an 18-hole Ocean Course and a 9-hole Forest Course. Both are spectacularly scenic, with holes that meander through the forest and along the South China Sea. Designed by Gary Player, the course was ranked Best Course in Asia by Asian Golf Magazine and has won numerous awards for its breathtaking and challenging courses.

**PRICE:** From US\$609 for 3 night stay





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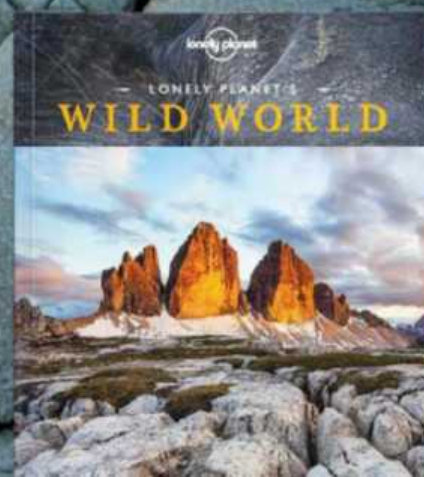
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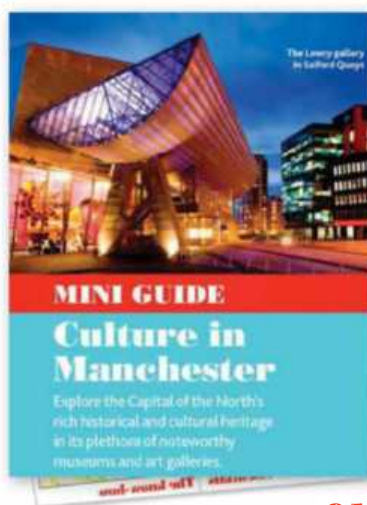
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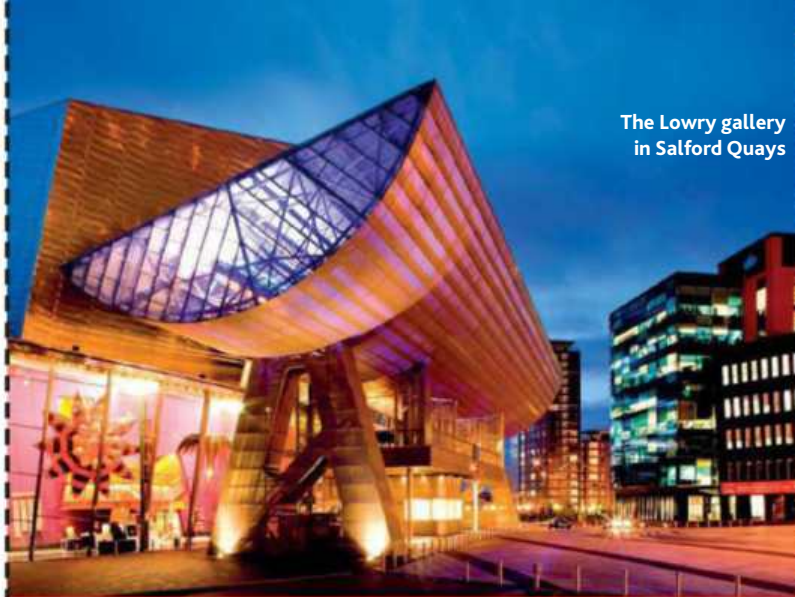
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The Lowry gallery in Salford Quays

## MINI GUIDE

# Culture in Manchester

Explore the Capital of the North's rich historical and cultural heritage in its plethora of noteworthy museums and art galleries.

## Arts

### MANCHESTER ART GALLERY 1

British art and European masters are on display at the city's top gallery. The older wing is home to Turner watercolours, as well as Pre-Raphaelite art. The newer gallery houses 20th-century British art by Lucien Freud, Francis Bacon, David Hockney and Stanley Spencer ([manchestergalleries.org](http://manchestergalleries.org); Mosley St; 10am–5pm Mon–Sun, until 9pm Thu; free).



Pre-Raphaelite works on display at the Manchester Art Gallery

### THE WHITWORTH 2

Traditionally known as the city's 'second' art gallery, the Whitworth has benefitted from a £15m restoration. There's a wonderful collection of British watercolours, the best selection of historic textiles outside London, and galleries showcasing works from Dürer and Rembrandt to Lucien Freud and David Hockney ([whitworth.manchester.ac.uk](http://whitworth.manchester.ac.uk); Oxford Rd; 10am–5pm, until 9pm Thu; free).

### LOWRY 3

Just west of the city in Salford Quays, the Lowry hosts everything from big-name theatrical productions to comedy in its multiple performance spaces. The centre is also home to 300 beautifully humanistic depictions of urban landscapes by LS Lowry, who was born in nearby Stretford ([thelowry.com](http://thelowry.com); Pier 8, Salford Quays; galleries 11am–5pm Sun–Fri, from 10am Sat; free; see website for performance details).

## Museums

### MUSEUM OF SCIENCE & INDUSTRY 4

Find out about Manchester's role in the Industrial Revolution among the collection of steam engines, factory machinery, and the exhibition telling the story of Manchester from the sewers up. Fun fact: the world's first submarine was designed by local curate Reverend George Garrett in 1880 ([mosi.org.uk](http://mosi.org.uk); Liverpool Rd; 10am–5pm; free).



Shoemakers' banner from 1832 at the People's History Museum

### NATIONAL FOOTBALL MUSEUM 5

This museum charts the evolution of British football from its beginnings to the multi-billion pound phenomenon it is today. One highlight is Football Plus+, a series of interactive stations that allows you to test your skills in simulated conditions, while the current exhibition tells the stories of footballers and fans during the First World War ([nationalfootballmuseum.com](http://nationalfootballmuseum.com); Urbis Building, Cathedral Gardens; 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, from 11am Sun; free).

### PEOPLE'S HISTORY MUSEUM 6

Clock in on the first floor of this refurbished Edwardian pumping station (literally: punch your card in an old mill clock) and plunge into the heart of Britain's fight for basic democratic rights, labour reform and fair pay. The second floor takes the struggle up to the current day, touching on gay rights, antiracism initiatives and the defining British sociopolitical landmarks, including the founding of the NHS ([phm.org.uk](http://phm.org.uk); Left Bank, Bridge St; 10am–5pm; free).

## Architecture

### IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM NORTH 7

Although the displays inside are compelling, this visually stunning steel building is an attraction in its own right. This was the first UK building to be designed by Daniel Libeskind and was created to reflect the subject of war – the three shards pieced together represent a globe shattered by war ([iwm.org.uk/north](http://iwm.org.uk/north); Trafford Wharf Rd; 10am–5pm; free).

### JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY 8

Less a library and more a cathedral to books, Basil Champneys' building is a breathtaking example of Victorian Gothic, no more so than the Reading Room, complete with vaulted ceilings and stained-glass windows. The collection of early printed books and rare manuscripts is equally impressive ([library.manchester.ac.uk](http://library.manchester.ac.uk); 150 Deansgate; noon–5pm Mon & Sun, 10am–5pm Tue–Sat; free).



The John Rylands Library houses one of only 48 Gutenberg Bibles

### TOWN HALL 9

Manchester has no shortage of eye-catching architecture, especially from the Victorian Age. Most noticeable is the impressive, Grade I listed, Neo-Gothic town hall. It is crowned by an 85m-high tower and features an especially ornate interior, including the Great Hall, decorated with murals by Ford Madox Brown. Be sure to grab afternoon tea in the Sculpture Hall Café ([manchester.gov.uk](http://manchester.gov.uk); Albert Sq; Mon–Sat).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Culture in Manchester



## Manchester essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Manchester Piccadilly is the main train station, serving intercity routes from Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool and London, as well as numerous other destinations (from £40 return from London Euston; 2 hours 10 minutes; [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk)). Victoria Station serves Halifax and Bradford (from £6). Metroshuttle buses provide a free service around the heart of Manchester, while there are frequent Metrolink trams between Victoria and Piccadilly as well as further afield to Castlefield and Salford Quays. For ticket information, see [tfgm.com](http://tfgm.com).

### WHERE TO STAY

1 Set in the neighbourhood of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, packed with delis, wholefood shops and cafés, **Abbey Lodge** offers a quiet retreat with spacious, homely rooms and excellent service ([abbey-lodge.co.uk](http://abbey-lodge.co.uk); 501



Wood panelling features in a few of the Palace Hotel's twin rooms

Wilbraham Rd; from £75).

2 An elegant refurbishment of a magnificent Victorian palace has resulted in the boutique **Palace Hotel**, which successfully combines the grandeur of the public areas with modern bedrooms (principal-hayley.com; Oxford St; from £110).

3 Not to be confused with the arts centre in Salford Quays, the five-star **Lowry** has fabulous bedrooms with enormous beds, a top restaurant and a spa that offers aromatherapy and massage ([thelowryhotel.com](http://thelowryhotel.com); 50 Dearmans Pl, Chapel Wharf; from £160).

## The know-how

### HISTORICAL HERITAGE

**1763** The Bridgewater Canal opens between Manchester and the coal mines at Worsley.

**1769** Richard Arkwright patents his spinning frame (below).

**1776** The Bridgewater Canal is extended to Liverpool and the open sea. Manchester is dubbed 'Cottonopolis'.

**1800s** The city's population swells from 90,000 in 1801 to two million in 1901. The flipside is dire working conditions and child labour.

**End of 19th century** Manchester loses a sizeable chunk of the textile trade to the US.

**1961-1983** Massive job cuts and the city's port closes in 1982.

**1996** An IRA bomb wrecks the city. Reconstruction spurs an influx of investment.

**Today** Manchester's population grows by a fifth between 2002 and 2012.

### FURTHER READING

**Lonely Planet's *England*** (US\$24.99) has a chapter on Manchester, Liverpool and the Northwest, which is also available to download at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com) (US\$4.95). Read about the Manchester International Festival – a festival of new work across the spectrum of visual arts, performing arts and popular culture – at [mif.co.uk](http://mif.co.uk). The festival takes place in odd-numbered

years, this year running from 2-19 July.



COMPILED BY NATALIE MILLMAN; WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FIONN DAVENPORT; PHOTOGRAPHS: STEVE MAYES/ALAMY; YADID LEVIT/ALAMY; PEOPLE'S HISTORY MUSEUM; SCIENCE MUSEUM/SSPL/GETTY IMAGES; TRAVEL PIX COLLECTION/AWL IMAGES





The restaurant-heavy  
Rue des Bouchers

## MINI GUIDE

# Eating in Brussels

From sugar-dusted waffles eaten hot off the griddle, and frites from street kiosks, through to fine dining and Belgian classics, Brussels' dining scene suits all budgets.

## Snacks and takeaway

### ✕ CRÈMERIE DE LINKEBEEK ①

Brussels' best fromagerie was established in 1902 and retains its original glazed tiles. It still stocks a beguiling array of cheeses, which you can also try in sandwiches with fresh salad, wrapped up ready to take to a nearby bench (00 32 2 512 3510; Rue du Vieux Marché aux Grains 4; 9am–6pm, to 7pm Fri & Sat, 9.30am–5pm Sun; sandwiches from US\$5.39).



Assemble an impromptu cheese  
board at Crémierie de Linkebeek

### ✕ MAISON ANTOINE ②

Frying since 1948, this classic little fritkot (takeaway chip kiosk) serves chips twice-fried in beef fat and paired with the traditional mayo, or sauces including curry and provençale. L'Autobus, First Bar and L'Esperance-Chez Bernard are some of the cafés on the same square that allow frite eaters to sit and snack if they buy a drink (maisonantoine.be; Place Jourdan; 11.30am–1am Sun–Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat; chips from US\$2.92).

### ✕ CLAIRE FONTAINE ③

Just off the square of Grand Sablon, this tiny but atmospheric tile-floored épicerie is fragrant with spices and home-cooked dishes from the small kitchen at the back. It's perfect for a nutritious and filling takeaway sandwich or quiche, or you can stock up on oils, wine and boxes of pain d'épices – a gingerbread-like cake (00 32 2 512 2410; Rue Ernest Allard 3; 11am–7pm Tue–Sat; sandwiches from US\$6.62).

## Desserts

### ✕ FREDERIC BLONDEEL ④

The smart, minimalist interior of this chocolate-maker's premises makes it a stylish spot for a cup of hot chocolate, or tea, while eyeing the elegant rows of pralines on display. Do try the Gladiators – single-origin chocolate mixed with hazelnuts, almonds, raisins or dried fruit (frederic-blondeel.be; Quai aux Briques 24; noon–6.45pm, from 10.30am Sat; chocolates from US\$1).



Hazelnut, raisin and barberry  
seasonings at Laurent Gerbaud

### ✕ MOKAFÉ ⑤

Locals get their waffles in this old-fashioned café under the glass arch of the Galeries-St Hubert. It's a little timeworn and dowdy inside, but wicker chairs in the beautiful arcade provide you with a view of passing shoppers. Try the traditional icing-sugar-sprinkled waffle or splurge with toppings including strawberries, cream and chocolate (00 32 2 511 7870; Galerie du Roi; 7.30am–11.30pm; waffles from US\$4).

### ✕ LAURENT GERBAUD ⑥

This bright and welcoming café is perfect for lunch or a coffee if you're between museums. Don't leave without trying the wonderful chocolates, which count as healthy in the world of Belgian chocs – they have no alcohol, additives or added sugar. Friendly owner Laurent also runs chocolate-tasting and chocolate-making sessions (chocolatsgerbaud.be; Rue Ravenstein 2d; 10.30am–7.30pm; hot chocolate US\$3.85).

## Special restaurants

### ✕ L'IDIOT DU VILLAGE ⑦

Advance reservations are essential to secure a table at this colourful, cosy restaurant, secluded on a little side street in the historically working-class Marolles district. Dishes are rich and aromatic, and portions plentiful considering the cachet of the place (lidiotduvillage.be; Rue Notre Seigneur 19; noon–2pm & 7pm–10.30pm Mon–Fri; mains from US\$23).



Take the smart option and book  
ahead for L'Idiot du Village

### ✕ L'OGENBLIK ⑧

A timeless bistro with lace curtains, marble-topped tables and a magnificent wrought-iron lamp, L'Ogenblik has been producing French classics for more than 40 years, and the expertise shows. It's worth the price for a special meal in the heart of town (ogenblik.be; Galerie des Princes 1; noon–2.30pm & 7pm–midnight, closed Sun and early Aug; lunch mains from £17, three-course menu from US\$53.90).

### ✕ COMME CHEZ SOI ⑨

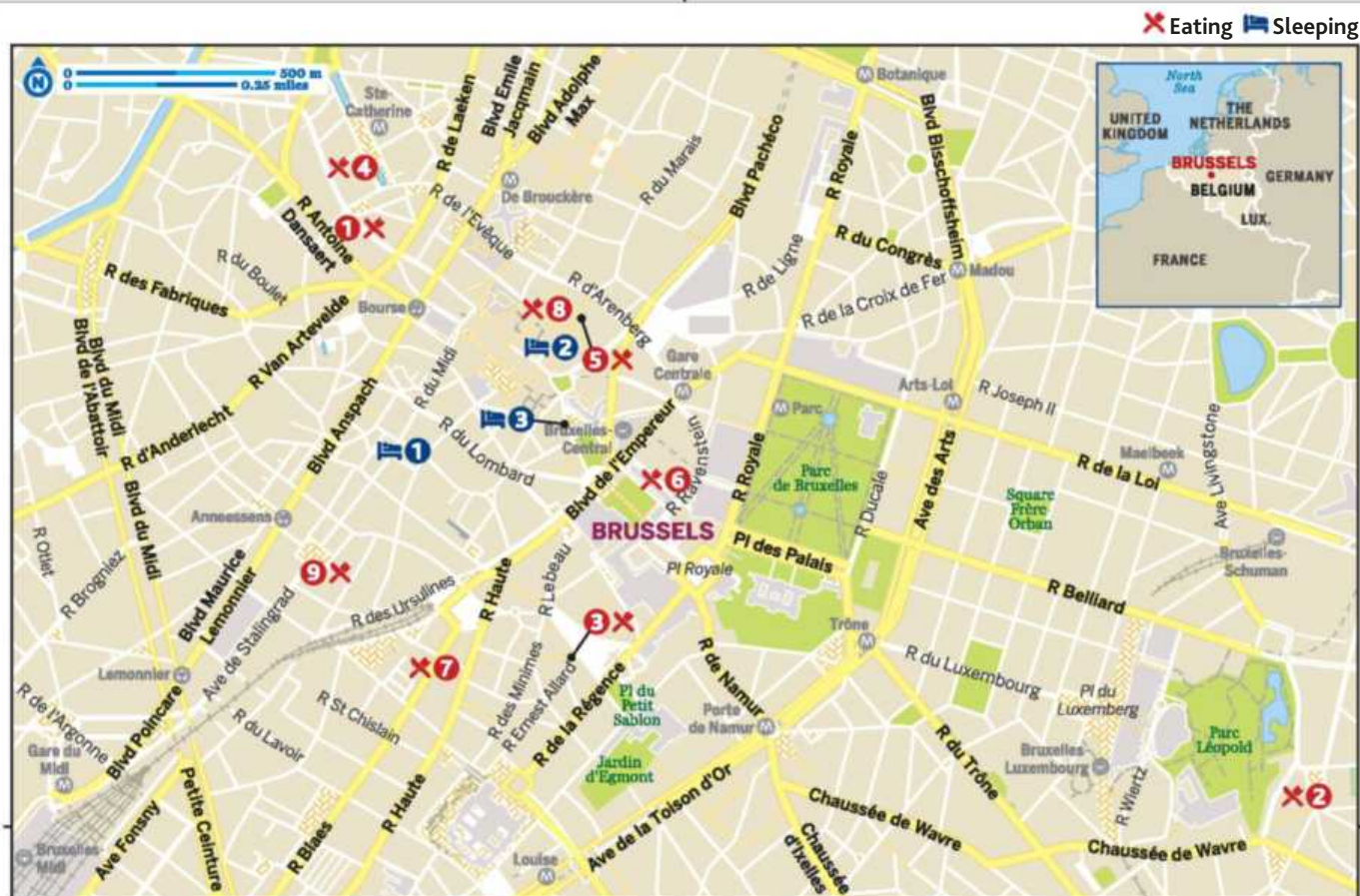
The name evokes cooking just like 'at home', but unless you craft the likes of lobster salad with black truffles or sole filets with Riesling and shrimp mousseline, it's nothing of the sort. The prices are gobsmacking, but so is the food from former chef Pierre Wynants's son-in-law, Lionel Rigolet (commechezsoi.be; Place Rouppe 23; Tue & Wed dinner, lunch and dinner Thu–Sat; mains from US\$53.90, three-course lunch menu US\$69.30).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Eating in Brussels



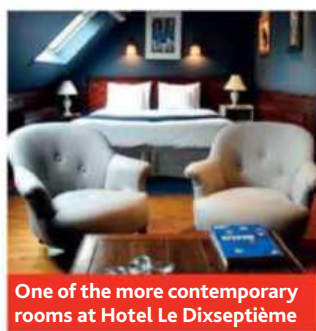
## Brussels essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Turkish Airlines, Etihad Airways, and Lufthansa fly from both Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Brussels with one stop (from US\$570; [turkishairlines.com](http://turkishairlines.com)). Brussels Airport Express trains run from the main airport to the city centre (20 mins; US\$10.32), or you can get an express bus to the EU quarter (30 mins; from US\$4.93). From Charleroi airport get a shuttle bus to Gare du Midi (1 hr; US\$15.40). Brussels has an integrated bus-tram-metro system (singles from US\$2.31; [stib-mivb.be](http://stib-mivb.be)).

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

Look out at the iconic peeing statue of the Manneken Pis from the six-room **La Vieille Lanterne**, an unsophisticated but well-kept place hidden behind a giftshop ([laviellelanterne.be](http://laviellelanterne.be); 29 Rue des Grands Carmes; from US\$92.40). The **Chambres d'Hôtes du Vaudeville** are located within the gorgeous Galeries St-



One of the more contemporary rooms at Hotel Le Dixseptième

Hubert. Décor styles include African and modernist. Larger front rooms have galerie views, but can be noisy ([theatreduvaudeville.be](http://theatreduvaudeville.be); Galerie de la Reine 15; from US\$130.90).

**Hotel Le Dixseptième** has a coffee-cream breakfast room with cherub reliefs, suites with four-poster beds and cheaper rooms located across a tiny enclosed courtyard-garden ([ledixseptieme.be](http://ledixseptieme.be); Rue de la Madeleine 25; from US\$223.29).

## The know-how

### CREATIVE CUISINE

There's more to Belgian cuisine than mussels and chips:

**Paling in 't groen/Anguilles-au-vert** Eel in a bright-green sorrel or spinach sauce

**Konijn met pruimen/Lapin aux pruneaux** Rabbit cooked until tender in a sauce that's sweetened with prunes

**Gegratineerde witloof/**

**Chicons au gratin** A gratin of endives (and sometimes ham) with a cheesy bechamel sauce  
**Stoemp** Boiled potatoes mashed together with other vegetables and served as a side or as a basic meal topped with sausage or ham

**Waterzooi** A cream-based soupy stew (pictured) traditionally made with chicken or fish, which also contains potatoes and assorted veggies and herbs.

### FURTHER READING



Lonely Planet's *Belgium & Luxembourg* (US\$24.99) has a full chapter on Brussels, which is available to download at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com) (US\$4.95),

while *Pocket Bruges & Brussels* (US\$13.99) is ideal for short breaks. Find details of more restaurants plus the potentially money-saving Brussels Card at [visitbrussels.be](http://visitbrussels.be). The 2002

film *Girl* by Dorothée van den Berghe is a portrait of three generations of women from Brussels.



COMPILED BY NATALIE MILLMAN; WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM HELENA SMITH. PHOTOGRAPHS: PETER ADAMS/AWL IMAGES, STEPHANE GAUTIER/AGEFOTOSTOCK, GEORGE COBET/AP/GETTY IMAGES, JTB PHOTO/SUPERSTOCK





Le Rocher seen from the Jardin Exotique

## MINI GUIDE

# Budget Monaco

It may be the world's second-smallest country, but Monaco has plenty of glitz, glamour and attitude. While it's not cheap, you can still enjoy its delights on a budget.

## Eating and drinking

### STREET EATS 1

Find inexpensive specialities such as socca (chickpea flour pancake), barbagjuan (chard and cheese pastries) and pan bagnat (right) in street or market stalls around the old town. The Casino supermarket is also a handy, central option, with a street-side bakery and pizzeria ([supercasino.fr](http://supercasino.fr); 17 Boulevard Albert 1er; 8.30am–midnight Mon–Sat, 9am–9pm Sun; pizza slices from US\$3).



Pan bagnat – in many ways, a salade niçoise in a loaf of bread

### TIP TOP 2

This spot on the Formula One Grand Prix street circuit near the Monte Carlo Casino is where Monégasques gather all night long for pizza, pasta and gossip – a good place to know, if you're feeling peckish after a night out or are on a budget and fancy simple dishes such as steak, roast chicken or calamari ([facebook.com/TipTopMonaco](http://facebook.com/TipTopMonaco); 11 Avenue des Spélugues; 10am–late; pizza from US\$14, mains from US\$15.40).

### FLASHMAN 3

This retro American diner-style decor with fluorescent lights and a chrome counter is funky. Expect the likes of burgers and entrecôte on the menu, plus reasonably priced drinks. There's live music on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, and the dress code is smart-casual (00 377 93 30 09 03; 7 Avenue Princesse Alice; 10am–6am Mon–Sat; pizza from US\$11.55, mains from US\$20).

## Sights

### CATHÉDRALE DE MONACO 4

Join the crowd that shuffles past the graves of Monaco's 20th-century power couple, Prince Rainier III and Princess Grace, located inside the choir of the principality's cathedral – a white stone construction in reinvented Romanesque–Byzantine style ([cathedrale.mc](http://cathedrale.mc); Avenue Saint-Martin; 8am–7pm May–Sep, 8.30am–6pm Oct–Apr; free).



Monaco upgraded its parish church to a cathedral in 1875

### LE ROCHER 5

The historic quarter of Monaco-Ville, also called Le Rocher, sits atop a pistol-shaped rock. It's this strategic location overlooking the sea that became the stronghold of the Grimaldi dynasty. Built as a fortress in the 13th century, the princely palace is now their private residence – changing of the guard takes place daily at 11.55am. Le Rocher is the only part of Monaco to have retained small, winding medieval lanes. To access it, walk up the Rampe Major from Place d'Armes in the Condamine area.

### JARDIN EXOTIQUE 6

Hundreds of species of cactus and other succulents crowd into this cliffside garden, from tennis ball-sized echinocereus to giant African candelabras. There are superb views of the principality, and your ticket also includes a 35-minute guided tour around the Grotte de l'Observatoire – a network of stalactite-rich caves and an important prehistoric site, where the temperature stays unusually warm ([jardin-exotique.mc](http://jardin-exotique.mc); 62 Boulevard du Jardin Exotique; 9am–dusk; US\$8).

## Summer thrills

### OPEN-AIR CINEMA 7

Sit back in your armchair and try not to be too distracted by the awesome views overlooking the sea – this open-air cinema at the foot of Le Rocher, round the corner from the port, shows crowd-pleasing blockbusters, mostly in English, every night from 20 June to September. There are no reservations ([cinema2monaco.com](http://cinema2monaco.com); Avenue de la Quarantaine; tickets US\$12.32).

### FIREWORKS 8

During July and August the port area is home to the International Fireworks Festival, a showdown of pyrotechnic expertise. Each top-notch show lasts around 20 minutes and the winner gets to organise the fireworks on 18 November, the eve of the national holiday. Quai Albert 1er and Avenue d'Ostende are good spots to watch the show ([monaco-feuxdartifice.mc](http://monaco-feuxdartifice.mc); 10pm 3 Jul & 18 Jul, 9.30pm 1 Aug & 8 Aug; free).



Fireworks light up the night sky behind the Place du Casino

### SWIMMING 9

Monaco's beaches are not the best in the Riviera but there are a couple of nice – and surprisingly, free – options. Esplanade Stefano Casiraghi is a concrete solarium near the open-air cinema, while the Plage du Larvotto is a sand option at the northeast end of the principality. For an Olympic-sized outdoor sea water pool, head to the Stade Nautique Rainier III (Quai Albert 1er; 9am–6pm May–Oct; from US\$3.50).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Budget Monaco

Beaches Festivals Entertainment Sights Eating Sleeping



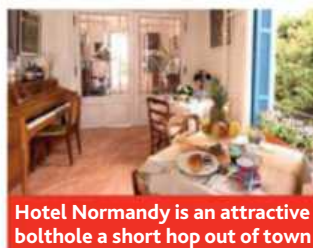
## Monaco essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Turkish Airlines and Lufthansa fly from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Nice (from US\$690; turkishairlines.com). From the airport, bus 110 goes to Monaco (45 minutes), or it's a 25-minute train trip from Nice St-Augustin station, itself a 15-minute walk from the airport terminal. One non-budget (but very Monaco) way in from the airport is via a scenic seven-minute helicopter ride (US\$147; heliairmonaco.com). Much of Monaco is walkable, with escalators and public lifts linking the steeper bits, and there is also a bus system running on six different lines (single US\$2.30, day pass US\$6.16; cam.mc).

### WHERE TO STAY

1 There's no such thing as a budget hotel in Monaco but **Hotel Normandy** is just over a mile away in Cap d'Ail, near a bus stop with services to Monaco. It's run by a family of artists, which



Hotel Normandy is an attractive bolthole a short hop out of town

shows in its original modern artworks (hotelnormandy.no; 6 Allée des Orangers; from US\$123).

2 **Miramar**, a modern hotel with a rooftop-terrace restaurant, is a great option right by the port. The hotel was fully refurbished in 2014 (miramarmonaco.com; 1 Avenue Président John Fitzgerald Kennedy; from US\$162).

3 Put preconceptions aside, for the **Novotel Monte Carlo** is no ordinary chain hotel. Rooms are bright and spacious, and the pool is open June to September (novotel.com; 16 Boulevard Princesse Charlotte; from US\$193).

## The know-how

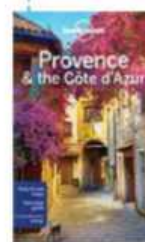
### CASINO DE MONTE CARLO

● The principality first decided to allow gambling in the 1850s, after the towns of Menton and Roquebrune had broken away, leaving the rest of Monaco as the poorest country in Europe.

● The current casino opened in 1863 in the new district of Monte Carlo. The building is typical of the style of France's Belle Époque. Among its lavish rooms are the Salles Touzet, decorated in oak, mahogany and jasper panelling; and the Salle Médecin, part of which is a restricted 'Super Privé' room.

● Citizens of Monaco are not actually allowed to gamble here. Everyone else aged 18 or over can enter with a passport or photo ID card for a fee of US\$11 – it's US\$11 extra for the private rooms. Visitors should dress reasonably smartly (no shorts or flipflops). Men need a jacket after 8pm in the private rooms.

### FURTHER READING



Lonely Planet's *Provence & the Côte d'Azur* (US\$21.99) has a chapter on Nice, Monaco and Menton, which is also

available to download at lonelyplanet.com (US\$4.95). While not universally admired by critics, *Grace of Monaco*, starring Nicole Kidman, tells the story of Grace Kelly's and Prince Rainier III's marriage crisis. Much of the action in the 2010

French romcom *L'Arnacœur* (*Heartbreaker*) takes place in Monaco.



COMPILED BY NATALIE MILLMAN; WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM EMILIE PILOU. PHOTOGRAPHS: HEMIS/ALAMY, JOHANNA HUBER/SIME/CORNNERS, ERIC NATHAN/ALAMY, DANIEL VALLA FRP/ALAMY



Zagreb Cathedral, in the Kaptol quarter, is currently being restored



## MINI GUIDE

# Weekend in Zagreb

Croatia's capital is perfectly sized for strolls, drinking coffee in the permanently full cafés, popping into museums and galleries, and enjoying the summer's outdoor concerts.

Fold 2

## Friday evening

### STROLL UPPER TOWN 1

As the oldest part of Zagreb, the Upper Town (Gornji Grad), has landmark buildings and churches from the earlier centuries of Zagreb's history. Head to Kaptol Square for a look at the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose twin spires soar over the city, and make sure you take a peek at the Stone Gate, the eastern entrance to medieval Gradec Town, now a shrine.

### BAR CRAWLING ALONG TKALČIČEVA 2

For cocktails and chic bars head to this Upper Town street (formally known as Ulica Ivana Tkalčića). Highlights include Cica at number 18, a tiny bar with cutting-edge work by local artists plus 25 kinds of rakija (fruit brandy). Over at number 52, head down the spiral staircase at Funk to a small basement with stone vaulted ceilings, DJs spinning house, jazz, funk and electronic music.



Find a perch for an evening drink in one of Tkalčićeva's bars

### LIVE MUSIC 3

Each July, the Zagreb Summer Evenings festival presents a cycle of open-air concerts in the Upper Town. Now in its 34th outing, the festival mostly celebrates classical music, with globally renowned artist performing, but also hosts jazz, blues and world music concerts. The atrium of Galerija Klovičevi Dvori, on Jezuitski trg, and the Gradec stage are used for performances (kdz.hr).

## Saturday

### COFFEE AND MARKET 4

Join in spiča – the typically Zagreb tradition of sipping coffee in the town centre between 11am and 2pm on Saturday. Popular streets for this often dressy spectacle include Bogovićeve, Tkalčićeva and Preradovićeva. It's ideally combined with a run at Dolac Market to browse its fruit and veg, local honey and handicrafts (market hours 7am–3pm Mon–Fri, to 2pm Sat, to 1pm Sun).



Traders from all over Croatia sell their products at Dolac Market

### MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS 5

Explore mementos that remain after a relationship ends at Zagreb's quirkiest museum. On display are donations from around the globe, in a string of all-white rooms. Exhibits range from a vinyl record played during a teenage breakup forty years ago to a stun gun that never got to be used. Check out the shop – the 'bad memories eraser' is a bestseller (brokenrelationships.com; Čirilometodska 2; 9am–10.30pm Jun–Sep, to 9pm Oct–May; US\$3.50).

### DINNER AT IVICA I MARICA 6

Based on the Brothers Grimm story *Hansel & Gretel* (*Ivica i Marica in Croatian*), this little restaurant and cake shop is made to look like the gingerbread house from the tale, with waiters clad in traditional costumes. It offers a good range of meat, fish and vegetarian dishes, but it's the cakes, štrukli (baked cheese dumplings) and ice creams that stand out (00 385 1 4817 321; Tkalčićeva 70; noon–11pm, to 10pm Sun; mains from US\$11).

## Sunday

### MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART 7

This swanky museum displays solo and thematic group shows by Croatian and international artists. The permanent display, called Collection in Motion, showcases 620 edgy works. There's also a packed schedule of film, theatre, concerts and performance art (msu.hr; Avenija Dubrovnik 17; 11am–6pm Tue–Fri & Sun, to 8pm Sat; US\$4.50).

### LUNCH AT VINODOL 8

On warm days, eat on the covered patio (entered through an ivy-clad passageway off Teslina), or avoid the heat in the dining hall with vaulted stone ceilings. Highlights from the Central European dishes include the succulent lamb, the veal and potatoes cooked in a peka (cast-iron lidded pot), and bukovače – local mushrooms (vinodol-zg.hr; Teslina 10; 10am–midnight; mains from US\$7.70).



One of the arcades at Mirogoj Cemetery, dating from 1876

### MEANDER MIROGOJ 9

A 10-minute ride north of Kaptol on buses 106 or 226 (or a 30-minute walk through leafy streets) takes you to one of the most beautiful cemeteries in Europe, at the base of Mount Medvednica. It's bounded by a majestic arcade, making it look like a fortress from the outside, but feeling calm and graceful on the inside (Aleja Hermanna Bollea 27; 6am–8pm Apr–Sep, 7.30am–6pm Oct–Mar; free).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS

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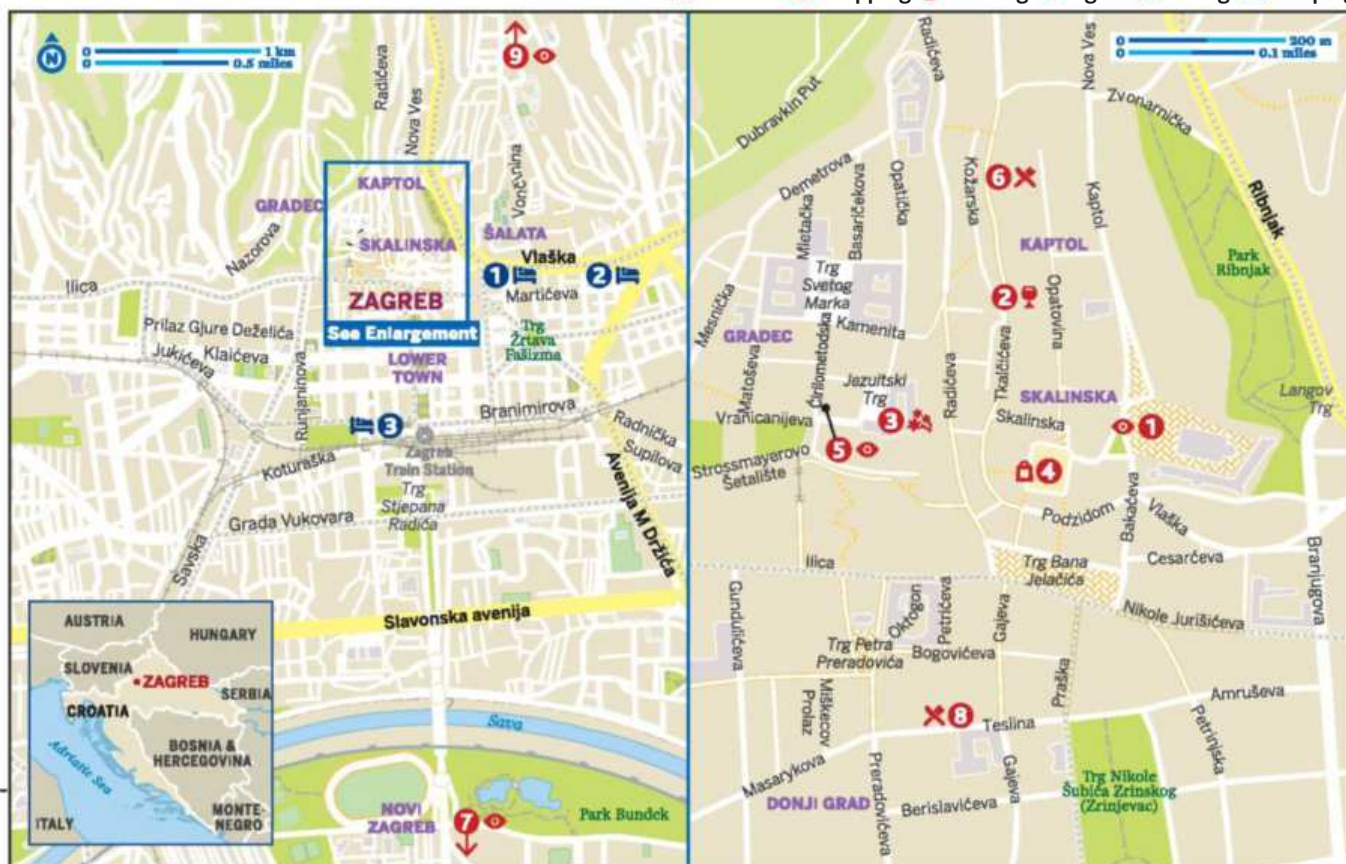
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# MINI GUIDE

## Weekend in Zagreb

Festivals Shopping Drinking Sights Eating Sleeping



## Zagreb essentials

### TRANSPORT

Qatar Airways and Lufthansa fly to Zagreb from Singapore and Kuala Lumpur respectively (from US\$691; lufthansa.com). Croatia Airlines runs a bus from the airport to the city's main bus station on Držićeva, one mile southeast of the Upper Town (30 minutes), while taxis cost around US\$10–US\$45. Zagreb's public transport is based on an efficient network of buses and trams (singles from US\$1.50; day tickets from US\$4.60; zet.hr), although the city centre is compact enough to make them almost unnecessary.

### WHERE TO STAY

**1 Studio Kairos** is an adorable b&b in a street-level apartment with four well-appointed rooms decked out by theme and there's a cosy common space where breakfast is served. The interior design is gorgeous and the friendly owners are a font of information. Bikes are also available for rent



The Esplanade Zagreb Hotel retains much of its Art Deco style

(studio-kairos.com; Vlaška 92; from £50).

**2** This six-storey **Hotel Jadran** has a superb location only minutes from the city's centrepiece Jelačić Square. The 49 rooms are laid out in a cheery style, and many have views of the cathedral (hotel-jadran.com.hr; Vlaška 50; from US\$92.40).

**3** The **Esplanade Zagreb Hotel** was built next to the train station in 1925 to welcome the Orient Express crowd in grand style. The hotel is replete with swirling marble, immense staircases and wood-panelled lifts (esplanade.hr; Mihanovića 1; from US\$147).

## The know-how

### MARKET DAYS

Venture beyond Dolac Market, to find these stellar offerings:

- The antiques market on Britanski trg (British Square) is one of central Zagreb's joys – rummage around for stamps, coins, books and antiques (Sun 6.30am–2.30pm).
- Hrelčić flea market is a huge space on the southeast edge of the city, packed with everything from car parts and old furniture to clothes and records. It's a great experience and a side of Zagreb you probably won't see anywhere else, with lots of music, grilled meat and general liveliness (Sajmišna cesta; 7am–3pm Wed & Sun).
- Mali Plac na Tavanu is a weekly gathering of small food producers who hawk their wares in an attic north of the city centre – anything from sage honey to natural cosmetics (tavan.info; Sinkovića 8; usually 11am–5pm Sat).

### FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Croatia* (US\$25.99) has a chapter on Zagreb, which can be downloaded at lonelyplanet.com (US\$4.95). Zagreb Bites offers guided tours of the city's hottest restaurants and wine bars you wouldn't easily find yourself – see



zagrebites.com. Croatia has long been a popular filming location – Zagreb has appeared in

different guises in films including *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Sophie's Choice*.



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A lagoon in the Parque Natural da Ria Formosa



## MINI GUIDE

# Crowd-free Algarve

While the southernmost region of Portugal is known for its beaches and sandy islands, it is also about enchanting hillsides, historic towns, rich flora and fauna, and walking trails.

## Interior pursuits

### ✦ WALKING THE VIA ALGARVIANA 4

Covering some of the most beautiful scenery in the Algarve, the 188-mile Via Algarviana walking trail crosses the breadth of Portugal from Alcoutim to Cabo de São Vicente, taking in the wooded hillsides of the Serras do Caldeirão and Monchique. It takes about 14 days to walk the entire trail (see [viaalgarviana.org](http://viaalgarviana.org) and [algarveway.com](http://algarveway.com)).

### ✦ CALDAS DE MONCHIQUE SPA 5

This spa hamlet is the place to come after hiking the surrounding hills of the Serra de Monchique, the Algarve's mountain range. The Romans loved its 32°C, slightly sulphurous waters, which are said to be good for rheumatism, and respiratory and digestive ailments. Admission to the Caldas de Monchique spa includes access to the sauna, steam bath, gym and swimming pool ([monchiquetermas.com](http://monchiquetermas.com); entry US\$27 or US\$17 for hotel guests).



A Bonelli's eagle finds a rocky perch in the Serra do Caldeirão

### ✦ SERRA DO CALDEIRÃO 6

This beautiful protected area of undulating hills, cork trees and harsh scrubland is renowned for its rich birdlife. It's an excellent place to hike – try the signed three-mile circuit walk up the limestone peak, the Rocha da Pena, which has abundant flora and fauna. Orchids, narcissi and native cistus cover the slopes, where red foxes and Egyptian mongooses are common. Eagle owls, Bonelli's eagles and buzzards have also been spotted here.

Fold 2

## Coastal highlights

### 📍 CABO DE SÃO VICENTE 1

Europe's southwesternmost point, Cape St Vincent, was a revered place even in the time of the Phoenicians, and at sunset you can almost hear the hissing as the sun hits the sea. At the end of the cape is a wind-whipped red lighthouse and the excellent, Museu dos Faróis, which showcases the importance of Sagres in Portugal's maritime navigation history.



Cabo de São Vicente, named after the patron saint of Lisbon

### 📍 PARQUE NATURAL DA RIA FORMOSA 2

This natural park is mostly a lagoon system stretching for 37 miles along the Algarve coastline. It encloses a vast area of sapal (marsh), salinas (salt pans), creeks and dune islands. The marshes are important for migrating and nesting birds. You can see many wetland birds here, along with ducks, shorebirds, gulls and terns. This is the nesting place of the little tern and rare purple gallinule.

### 📍 ILHA DA BARRETA 3

While Faro's beach is crammed in July and August, you can get a ferry out to Praia de Farol (on Ilha da Culatra) and Ilha da Barreta (aka Ilha Deserta), a long and narrow strip of sand just off the mainland. Here, you'll find O Estaminé, an environmentally friendly restaurant built on boardwalks that serves a great selection of local fish ([ilha-deserta.com](http://ilha-deserta.com); 11am–5.30pm winter, 10.30am–7pm summer).

## Historic towns & sites

### 📍 OLHÃO 7

Pronounced ol-yowng, Olhão is the Algarve's biggest fishing port, with an active waterfront and pretty lanes in its old quarters. There aren't many sights, but the flat-roofed Moorish-influenced neighbourhoods and North African feel make it a pleasant place to wander. Head to any of the seafood restaurants for good cataplanas (seafood stew) and xerém (similar to polenta).



Faro's Arco da Vila was built on an original Moorish gateway

### 📍 CIDADE VELHA FARO 8

Set within medieval walls, Faro's Cidade Velha consists of cobbled streets and squares reconstructed in a mix of styles following batterings, first by marauding British and then by earthquakes. Enter through the neoclassical Arco da Vila, then head down the orange-tree-lined Largo da Sé, with the câmara municipal (town hall) on the left, the Paço Episcopal (Bishop's Palace) on the right and the sé (cathedral) in front of you.

### 📍 MILREU RUINS 9

Set in beautiful countryside, the ruins of this grand Roman villa provide a rare opportunity to gain insight into Roman life. To the right of the entrance is the site's water sanctuary, a temple devoted to the cult of water. In the 15th century, a rural house, which you can still see today, was constructed within the abandoned site (Milreu & Estói; 9.30am–12.30pm & 2pm–5pm, until 6pm in the summer; US\$2.30).

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# MINI GUIDE

## Crowd-free Algarve



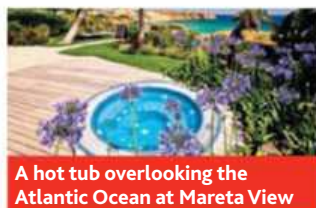
## Algarve essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Lufthansa and Qatar Airways fly from Kuala Lumpur and Singapore respectively to Faro (from US\$691; lufthansa.com). Buses 14 and 16 run from the airport to the city centre (20 minutes; US\$2.77). A good bus network runs along the Algarve coast and inland to Loulé. From here, you can access the Algarve interior, although services become more limited. Trains run along the coast between Faro and Vila Real de Santo António, and Faro and Lagos, while most main towns have reliable car-hire outlets – a week's hire costs from around US\$69.30 (see [travelsupermarket.com](http://travelsupermarket.com)).

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

1 The white and aquamarine décor of **Mareta View** in Sagres gives it a seaside feel (the rooms' mood lighting rivals the Cape Vincent lighthouse beacon). It has wonderful sea views, excellent breakfasts and is



A hot tub overlooking the Atlantic Ocean at Mareta View

located on the old plaza ([maretaview.com](http://maretaview.com); from US\$54).

2 The setting of **Quinta do Coração**, a converted farmhouse in Carrasqueiro, is lovely – on a hill, surrounded by eucalyptus, olive groves and cork trees – on the Via Algarviana. This isn't a gleaming white-tiled place; the rooms are charmingly rough and rustic ([algarveparadise.com](http://algarveparadise.com); from US\$61.60).

3 We're not sure how this modern cubist block made it past the town planners, but **Hotel Faro** has 90 sleek rooms with big beds and marble bathrooms. The bar-restaurant with terrace is great for a cocktail ([hotelfaro.pt](http://hotelfaro.pt); from US\$107.80).

## The know-how

### TOP 10 BEACHES

The Algarve's diverse coastline stretches for 90 miles along the Atlantic Ocean.

**Odeceixe** A beach bordered by a river and the ocean.

**Praia da Falésia** A posh 'resort' beach backed by ochre cliffs.

**Praia da Marinha** Great snorkelling, with a novel entry via a long staircase.

**Meia Praia** Vast, popular and scenic, with watersports.

**Praia do Barril** Crown jewel of Ilha de Tavira, with an anchor cemetery.

**Ilha da Barreta** Accessed by boat through nature-filled lagoons.

**Praia de Vale Figueira** A stretch of wild, little-frequented coast.

**Praia da Bordeira** Wild, untamed beauty (with surfing).

**Praia da Dona Ana and Praia do Camilo** Enchanting, golden rock formations.

**Praia de Vale do Lobo**

Has all the tourist services within reach.

### FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Portugal* (US\$24.99) has a chapter on the Algarve, which is also available to download at [lonelyplanet.com](http://lonelyplanet.com) (US\$4.95). The Algarve Tourism Board can help you get off the beaten track – pick up a copy of its Trails in the Algarve from tourist offices, and see [walkalgarve.com](http://walkalgarve.com) to plan. *The Book of Disquietude* is a literary masterpiece by Portugal's greatest poet, Fernando Pessoa.



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The Chain Bridge crosses the Danube between Buda and Pest

## MINI GUIDE

# Drinking in Budapest

From the famous 'ruin' bars – abandoned buildings turned into pop-up bars – to garden clubs, it's easy to see why Budapest is a top European nightlife destination.

## Garden and ruin bars

### ★ INSTANT 1

This ruin bar on Pest's most pulsing nightlife strip has 26 rooms and seven bars on three levels, with underground DJs and dance parties. It's always heaving as there's something here to suit every taste. Check out the blue school of fish and the upside-down room where chairs and beds hang from the ceiling (instant.co.hu; VI Nagymező utca 38; 4pm–6am; free entry).



Instant ruin bar, where even pigs fly, is open daily until 6am

### ★ HOLDUDVAR 2

Occupying a huge indoor and outdoor space on Margaret Island, 'Moon Court' is a pulsating seasonal club, which rocks to different genres of music each night. As well as serving decent food, Holdudvar also contains an art gallery and open-air cinema – what more do you need? (holdudvar.net; XIII Margit-sziget; 11am–midnight Sun–Tue, 11am–2am Wed, 11am–4am Thu–Sat; Apr–Sep).

### 📍 LOKÁL 3

A convivial ruin pub offering a variety of distractions – from the escape game in the basement to the upstairs swing bar and, dangerously, a tattoo parlour. The less adventurous can rifle through its fancy-dress shop or simply enjoy a drink in the garden or at the atmospheric ground-floor bar (lokalbar.hu; VII Dob utca 18; 5pm–midnight Mon–Wed, 5pm–4am Thu–Sat; 300ml draught beer US\$1.20).

## Best bars and pubs

### ★ CSENDES 4

A quirky café-bar just off the Little Ring Rd with junkyard chic decorating the walls and floor space, the 'Quiet' is just that until the regular DJ arrives and cranks up the volume. There's also a vintage clothing store out back (facebook.com/sendesvintagebar; V Ferenczy István utca 5; 10am–midnight Mon–Wed, 10am–2am Thu–Fri, 2pm–2am Sat, 2pm–midnight Sun).



Csendes is an equally good spot for brunch or a late-night drink

### ★ SUTTOGÓ PIANO BAR 5

Camp as a caravan park, there's always fun to be had at this romantic piano bar near the Opera House. You'll find comfy sofas, soft lighting and a jazz pianist every night, with music starting around 10pm. There's a decent drinks list too – including cocktails, which are especially good, and you won't lack for nibbles (suttogopianobar.hu; VI Hajós utca 27; 9.30pm–5am Tue–Sat; glass of wine from US\$2, sarnies US\$4.60).

### 📍 KISÜZEM 6

Plants adorn the bare-brick interior of this relaxed corner bar where a mixed-age crowd mingle at the bar, on the pavement outside or at the tables ranged around the interior. With a bohemian vibe, this bar displays artwork and hosts sporadic live music such as jazz, folk and experimental, and serves bar food and locally roasted coffee (hu-hu.facebook.com/Kisuzem; VII Kis Diófa utca 2; noon–2am Sun–Wed, noon–3am Thu–Sat).

## Wine and cocktail bars

### 📍 BOUTIQ' BAR 7

Low-lit 'speakeasy' serving expertly mixed cocktails and an educated selection of craft spirits. For something Hungarian, try a creation that includes Tokaji wine or pálinka (fruit brandy) – such as the Dazer, which includes gin, whiskey, apricot brandy, egg white, orange and lemon (boutiqbar.hu; V Paulay Ede utca 5; 6pm–2am Tue–Sat; cocktails from US\$6.50).



Boutiq' Bar is staffed by award-winning bartenders

### 📍 OSCAR AMERICAN BAR 8

The décor is cinema inspired (as well as film memorabilia, you'll find leather director's chairs) and the beautiful crowd often act like they're on camera. Not to worry: the potent cocktails – from daiquiris and cosmopolitans to mojitos – go down a treat. There's also music most nights (oscarbar.hu; I Ostrom utca 14; 5pm–2am Mon–Wed, 5pm–4am Thu–Sat; cocktails from US\$4.60).

### 📍 DIVINO BORBÁR 9

DiVino is Budapest's most popular wine bar – as the crowds spilling out into the square in front of the basilica will demonstrate. Choose from 120 types of wine produced by some 30 winemakers under the age of 35, but be warned: those 100ml glasses go down quickly (divinoborbar.hu; V Szent István tér 3; 4pm–midnight Sun–Wed, 4pm–2am Thu–Sat; wine from US\$2.50, glass deposit is US\$2).

TURN OVER FOR MAP AND NUMBER LOCATIONS



# MINI GUIDE

## Drinking in Budapest

🍷 Drinking ★ Entertainment 🛏 Sleeping



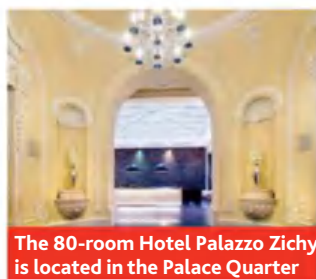
## Budapest essentials

### 1 TRANSPORT

Lufthansa and Turkish Airlines fly from both Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to Budapest (from US\$690; turkishairlines.com). The airport is 15 miles from the city: you can get the 200E bus into the city centre, but the Airport Shuttle Minibusz will take you straight to your hotel if you book in advance (approx US\$24.64 return; airportshuttle.hu), or taxis are plentiful (approx US\$26.18; fotaxi.hu). Budapest is easy to get around with the public transport system cheap and efficient: the basic fare for all forms of transport is US\$1.54 (bkv.hu).

### 2 WHERE TO STAY

1 The cosy **Hotel Papillon** in Rózsadomb (Rose Hill) has a delightful garden with a small swimming pool. There are also four apartments available in the same building, one with a lovely roof terrace (hotelpapillon.hu; Rózsahegy 3/b; from US\$41.58).



The 80-room Hotel Palazzo Zichy is located in the Palace Quarter

2 Once the sumptuous 19th-century residence of the aristocratic Zichy family, **Hotel Palazzo Zichy** still has original features such as wrought-iron bannisters (hotel-palazzo-zichy.hu; Lőrinc pap tér 2; from US\$98.56).

3 The grand five-star **Corinthia Hotel Budapest** has 434 rooms. Its lobby – a double atrium with massive marble staircase – is extremely impressive, while the Royal Spa, which dates back to 1886, has a 15m-deep pool (corinthia.com; Erzsébet körút 43-49; from US\$323.39).

## The know-how

### LOCAL DRINKS

- The local beers are most commonly Dreher, Kobányai and Arany Ászok – you'll find them served in a pohár (0.3l) or korsó (0.4 or 0.5l).
- The most distinctive Hungarian red wines come from Villány and Szekszárd in Southern Transdanubia, while the best dry whites are produced around Lake Balaton and in Somló.
- The red Bikavér ('Bull's Blood') from Eger and the honey-sweet white Tokaj wines are Hungary's best known wines internationally.
- The country's most famous spirits are Pálinka (a strong brandy) and eau-de-vie (distilled from a variety of fruits – most commonly from apricots or plums). Or try Unicum, a bitter aperitif that's been around since 1790 and is now available in three different varieties.

### FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Budapest* (US\$21.99) has all you need for a trip to the Hungarian capital, or you can download relevant chapters from the book at lonelyplanet.com (US\$4.95). Check out ruinpubs.com for more information and reviews on the city's one-off bars. Watch *Children of Glory*, a 2006 film about the 1956 anti-Soviet



uprising in Budapest through the eyes of a player on Hungary's Olympic water-polo team.



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# WIN a 2-nights' stay\* at Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort Inle, Myanmar

Worth  
**US\$680**



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20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277

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Address		
Postal code	DOB	/ /
Mobile	Email*	

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## THE PRIZES

This great prize includes:

- ▶ Two nights' stay in a One-bedroom Aureum Inle Villa
- ▶ Breakfast and afternoon tea for 2 persons



## HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic prize, simply fill in your details on the entry form and send it to: Regent Media Pte Ltd, **Lonely Planet Asia Nov/Dec 2015**, 20 Bedok South Road Singapore 469277. Alternatively you can email to [lpcontests@regentmedia.sg](mailto:lpcontests@regentmedia.sg), titled **Lonely Planet Asia Nov/Dec 2015 – AUREUM PALACE HOTEL & RESORT INLE, MYANMAR** Promotion with your full name, ID number, contact number and address. Competition closes 31 December 2015 at 11.59pm. Terms and conditions apply.

### Terms & Conditions.

Pt 1: This prize does not include air flight tickets to Myanmar.  
This promotion is open to all except staff of Regent Media and sponsor.  
Prizes must be taken as provided and are not transferable or exchangeable for cash.  
Winners will be notified by post, email or phone and prize is to be collected at address stated on notification letter.  
The management reserves the right to replace items with those of similar value.  
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Entry information may be used for future marketing and promotional purposes.



# WIN a 2-nights' stay\* at Aureum Palace Hotel & Resort Inle, Myanmar

Worth  
**US\$680**



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resort is perched both on the edge and within the lake waters with the main facilities including 2 restaurants, bar and club, banquet facilities, extensive spa and leisure services.

Aureum Resort & Spa offers unsurpassed hotel experience at this unique destination.

\* Terms & conditions apply

**TURN THE PAGE TO FIND OUT HOW TO ENTER**





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**For more information regarding flight locations and connections with PRD,** please visit [www.hongkongairport.com](http://www.hongkongairport.com) or travel agencies for enquiries.



# Seoul

## Insider's Guide

produced by





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### • MORE TOURIST INFORMATION

The official travel guide to Seoul website ([visitseoul.net](http://visitseoul.net)) offers plenty of travel information on Seoul, including recommended themed tour courses, transportation, accommodation, must-go-to restaurants, and tour programs.



# Travel Seoul Make It Happen

About Seoul \* Essential Travel Information \*  
Transportation Information \*  
Recommended Itineraries \* Top 5 Experiences in Seoul





# About Seoul

## HISTORY

Seoul City, the capital of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the nation's largest metropolis, has developed into a political, economic, and cultural hub over a period spanning back to prehistoric times. The city was not named Seoul until August 15, 1945, the National Liberation Day — it had been called “Hanyang” during the Joseon Dynasty and “Gyeongseongbu” during the Japanese colonial rule. Seoul was designated as a capital city in 1948, when the Government of the Republic of Korea was established, and gained the current official name of Seoul Special City in 1949.

The economic development that followed during the 1960s has evolved the city into the present economic center of Korea. Seoul has enhanced its international competitiveness in fields such as finance and high-tech IT and has become a global hub for trading and logistics based on its outstanding transportation system. By virtue of these accomplishments, Seoul is now internationally recognized as the business hub of Northeast Asia.

## GEOGRAPHY

Seoul is located in the midwestern part of the Korean Peninsula, at 37° 34' north latitude and 126° 59' east longitude. The Hangang traverses the city from east to west. Surrounded by mountains such as Bukhansan, Gwanaksan, and Dobongsan, Seoul displays a basin topography. The city is divided into 25 *gu* (autonomous administrative districts); the downtown mainly consists of Jung-gu and Sejong-daero at Jongno-gu.

## WEATHER

Seoul has four distinct seasons. Spring begins

in March. Summer (June-August) is sweltering and humid, and a very heavy rainy (monsoon) season comes around mid-July. The average temperature in August, the hottest month of the year, is 27°C. Autumn reaches its peak in October, when the leaves turn red and yellow. The temperature plummets during the winter season (December-February). The best seasons for visiting are spring and autumn.

## AREA & POPULATION

Seoul comprises an area of 605.15km<sup>2</sup>. It accounts for only 0.6% of the Korean territory, but has a population of 10.4 million (as of June 2015), one-fifth of the Republic of Korea's total population.

## CULTURE

Seoul has hosted the 1986 Asian Games, 1988 Summer Olympics, 2002 FIFA World Cup, 2010 G-20 Seoul Summit, and 2012 Nuclear Security Summit. A cosmopolitan city in every sense of the world, Seoul is the cultural center of Korea, boasting numerous museums, galleries, libraries, newspaper companies, concert halls, and broadcasting companies.

*Hallyu* (Korean Wave), an initial step in the export of contemporary Korean culture overseas to countries in Asia, the Americas, and Europe, was first driven by K-Pop and K-Drama. International audiences who have come to know Korea through music, movies, and soap operas are now visiting Korea to discover in person Seoul's various attractions. The city has met this increase in the number of visitors with provision of convenient facilities in and around the popular tourist destinations.





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The Official Guide to  
Everything about Seoul

 **tripadvisor** Seoul reviews

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# Essential Travel Information

## PASSPORT & VISA

All visitors to the Republic of Korea should possess a valid passport. With the exception of citizens from countries that have visa waiver agreements with the Republic of Korea, tourists must apply for a single entry visa, which allows a stay of 90 days from the date of issue. For details on visa exemption countries and period of stay, please visit [www.hikorea.go.kr](http://www.hikorea.go.kr).

## TIME DIFFERENCE

South Korea is nine hours ahead of GMT/UTC.

## CURRENCY

The South Korean unit of currency is the won (₩). Notes come in denominations of ₩1,000, ₩5,000, ₩10,000, and ₩50,000; in the case of coins, ₩10, ₩50, ₩100, and ₩500 are used.

## CHANGING MONEY & EXCHANGE RATES

A Korean currency note of ₩10,000 equals about US\$8.5 (as of October 2015). Most banks offer a currency exchange service (working hours 9am-4pm). There are also licensed money changers around the downtown areas near Myeong-dong or Itaewon, which are popular tourist destinations.

## CREDIT CARDS & ATMs

Most of the accommodation, dining, shopping, and leisure venues accept credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard, AmEx. ATMs are easily found throughout Seoul. Cash machines with a "Global ATM" sign offer multi-lingual services.

## PRICES

Prices in Seoul are relatively high compared to major cities throughout the world. A traveler's

daily budget is expected to be at least ₩100,000 when using business hotels, mid-range restaurants, and public transportation.

## TAX REFUNDS

VAT can be refunded when more than ₩30,000 was spent in any shop with a "Tax Free" sign. Upon leaving the country, visit the customs declaration office at Incheon International Airport with your passport, receipts, and purchased items before the check-in to get a confirmation stamp; or use the kiosk machine.

## ELECTRICITY

220V, 60Hz.

## EMERGENCY CALLS

Police — 112

Fire & Ambulance — 119

Tourist Information — 1330

Seoul Information (Dasan Call Center) — 120

## COUNTRY CODE

+82

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day — January 1

Lunar New Year's Day — January 1 (lunar calendar)

Independence Movement Day — March 1

Children's Day — May 5

Buddha's Birthday — April 8 (lunar calendar)

Memorial Day — June 6

Liberation Day — August 15

Chuseok — August 15 (lunar calendar)

National Foundation Day — October 3

Hangul Proclamation Day — October 9

Christmas Day — December 25

## USEFUL KOREAN EXPRESSIONS

안녕하세요(an-nyōng-ha-se-yo). — Hello.

고맙습니다(ko-map-sūm-ni-da). — Thank you.

미안합니다(mi-an-ham-ni-da). — Sorry.

실례합니다(shil-lé-ham-ni-da). — Excuse me.

안녕히 가세요(an-nyōng-hi ka-se-yo). — Goodbye.

얼마예요(öl-ma-ye-yo)? — How much is it?

맛있어요(ma-shi-ssō-yo)! — It's delicious!

길을 잃었어요(ki-rül-i-rōss-ō-yo). — I am lost.

네(né). — Yes.

아니요(a-ni-yo). — No.



Carried by the wings of the wind  
I want to fly far away

Away from the same scenery

Away from the every day  
that is always the same

The beginning of  
a lyrical journey.



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DUTY  
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# Transportation Information

## GETTING THERE

Many airlines offer direct flights from major Asian cities—Singapore, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Hanoi, Hong Kong, etc.—to Incheon International Airport.

## FROM THE AIRPORT TO SEOUL AIRPORT EXPRESS TRAIN

Airport Express is the fastest way to get to Seoul Station from the Incheon International Airport. The express train runs non-stop to Seoul Station (43 min.). The airport railroad express station is directly connected to the airport. Fares from ₩3,950; arex.or.kr

\* T-money Card is a rechargeable transportation card which can pay bus, subway, and taxi fares in Seoul and the surrounding Gyeonggi-do Province. Fares vary with the distance traveled, and transferring charges between buses and subways are free up to five transfers. The card can be easily purchased and charged at subway stations or in convenience stores.

## AIRPORT BUS

There are two types of buses that provide service to Incheon International Airport: deluxe and standard. Deluxe buses, including Korean Air Lines (KAL) limousines, stop at major hotels in Seoul. Standard buses stop at various locations throughout Seoul. T-money cards are accepted. Tickets from ₩9,000; calt.co.kr

## TAXI

Four types of taxis provide service to Incheon International Airport: regular, deluxe (high-priced), international (foreign languages available), and jumbo (capacity of up to eight people). Every taxi has a meter, and a ₩6,600 toll (in the case of small cars) for the Incheon International Expressway is added to the fare. International taxis provide fixed fares, which start from ₩55,000. Credit cards and T-money

cards are accepted. For details, inquire at the airport information desk. 1644 2255; internationaltaxi.co.kr

## GETTING AROUND SEOUL BUS

Three types of buses operate in Seoul: blue buses, which connect the outer areas to the inner city; green buses, which connect inner city neighborhoods; and small green buses (local buses), which go around neighborhoods. Bus numbers and routes are posted at each bus stop. For more information on bus stops and routes, check the “Seoul Bus” mobile application. Basic fares start from ₩1,000 (local), ₩1,300 (blue and green).

## SUBWAY

Seoul’s nine subway lines are distinguished by colors. You can purchase a single journey ticket at all subway stations with a ₩500 refundable deposit. The deposit will be returned when you insert the ticket in the Deposit Refund Device after reaching your destination. A single journey ticket cannot be used when transferring to a bus. Basic fare ₩1,250.

## TAXI

Regular taxis have a basic charge of ₩3,000 for 2km. A 20% surcharge is levied between midnight and 4am. Deluxe taxis cost ₩5,000 for the first 3km. International taxis must be reserved in advance through the website.

## CAR HIRE

Lotte Rent-a-Car and AJ Rent-a-Car offer car rental services at Incheon International Airport. You can hire a car at the airport rental desks or make a reservation through the websites listed here. From ₩95,000 a day; Lotte Rent-a-Car 032 743 8000, lotterentacar.net; AJ Rent-a-Car 032 743 3307, ajrentacar.co.kr

## SEOUL CITY TOUR BUS

Seoul City Tour buses run between Seoul’s top tourist attractions. A ticket allows you to get on and off a tour bus at any destination during a single day. Tickets from ₩12,000; 02 777 6090; seoulcitybus.com, gangnamtour.go.kr



The history of



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# Recommended Itineraries

## STOPOVER



### HALF DAY

Take the airport express train to the Digital Media City (DMC) and Hongik University (Hongdae). Apply for the IT tour at DMC, where high-tech exhibits are on show, then head to the nearby World Cup Park. Check out Hongdae, a neighborhood that abounds in sophisticated cafes, restaurants, and fashion shops; young artists from the famed nearby university regularly gather here.

### ONE DAY

Visit Myeong-dong or the downtown City Hall area by airport bus. These districts make good bases for looking around the tourist attractions at Gwanghwamun and Jongno. Hop on the Seoul City Tour Bus departing from Gwanghwamun and look around Insa-dong, Gyeongbokgung, Itaewon, Hanok Village, Namsan, the N Seoul Tower, etc.

## TWO NIGHTS AND THREE DAYS

### DAY 1

Korean handicraft shops and *hanok* (traditional Korean houses) brunch cafes dot the small alleys of Samcheong-dong and Gahoe-dong. Satisfy your appetite at Tongin Market, a typical traditional market, before turning your steps to the Dongdaemun Design Plaza & Park (DDP). Visit exhibitions and shop for artistic items there. Keep shopping at the Dongdaemun night market: fashion accessories and delicious foods are on offer.

### DAY 2

Take the Gangnam City Tour Bus for shopping in the Gangnam area. Spend the evening at Namsan Park, where the nearby Grand Hyatt Hotel Seoul operates an ice rink every winter. It is one of the most romantic places to enjoy the night view of Seoul while listening to beautiful music.

### DAY 3

Myeong-dong is a top shopping district, where you can find the fashion and beauty trends that drive Hallyu. It takes at least a half-day to look around Myeong-dong's department stores, duty free shops, and road shops. Stores at the neighboring Namdaemun Market deal in everything from groceries to household items.





## THREE NIGHTS AND FOUR DAYS



### DAY 1

Start your trip at the old palaces—the landmarks of downtown Seoul. You can reserve different Seoul Walking Guide tours at [visitseoul.net](http://visitseoul.net), if a guided-tour is needed. Enjoy late-night shopping in Insa-dong, Samcheong-dong, Daehangno, and Dongdaemun, which are located close to the palaces. Experience the energy of the night markets.

### DAY 2

Have brunch on Sinsa-dong's Garosu-gil street in the morning, then walk around the busy nearby streets of Gangnam. If you are lucky, you can spot Hallyu stars in Cheongdam-dong and Apgujeong—the stomping grounds of the famous. Scan the city's night view from the N Seoul Tower to wrap up a great day.

### DAY 3

A large number of creative artists live in Hongdae, an area dotted by stylish cafes, restaurants, and handicraft workshops. Stroll around the Yeonnam-dong, Sangsu-dong, and Hapjeong-dong neighborhoods and look around the local designers' gorgeous

workshops. At night, party it up in Hongdae's glamorous clubs and live-music bars.

### DAY 4

Head to Itaewon for a cosmopolitan atmosphere. Explore Hannam-dong's high-end restaurants, galleries, and selection shops before taking a stroll along the youthful streets of Gyeongridan-gil, a concentration of Seoul's trendiest dessert cafes, restaurants, and bars. The night in Itaewon is lively and cheerful; people from all over the world come to mix in exclusive bars and casual pubs, which stay open till late.

### DAY 5

Spend a day on Yeouido Island, located beside the Hangang River. The '63 Building' commands a magnificent view over the city and has a gallery, a movie theater, and restaurants in its culture complex, named '63 Square.' The IFC Mall (a large shopping center) is conveniently sited near the 63 Building. Night cruises can be booked at the Yeouido Quay; the cruise ships offer fantastic night views of Hangang River and the city.



# Top 5 Experiences in Seoul



## Food

Acquaint yourself with the Korean food culture by trying out *hansik* (Korean food) and various types of traditional Korean food at restaurants in the city's famed food alleys.



### FOOD ALLEYS

Gwangjang Market and Tongin Market are two of Seoul's signature food alleys. Sindang-dong *tteok-bokki* (Stir-fried Rice Cake) and Jangchung-dong *jokbal* (pig's trotters boiled with soy sauce and spices) are popular choices among the various foods sold in the food alleys.

### CHICKEN & BEER, MAKGEOLLI & JEON

Korean-style seasoned fried chicken with beer, and *makgeolli* (a traditional fermented rice wine) with *jeon* (pancake-like dishes) are favorite drinks and side dishes among Koreans.

### DESSERT CAFES

Seoul boasts a seeming endless selection of dessert cafes, from traditional Korean teahouses that serve traditional teas and rice cakes to trendy Western-style cafes that sell macarons and cakes.

### FINE DINING RESTAURANTS

Savor delectable dishes made with exquisite ingredients in local celebrity chefs' restaurants.

### HANSIK

Try out *hanjeongsik* (a traditional Korean course) and *hansik* dishes such as *bibimbap* (rice mixed with vegetables, beef, and *gochu-jang*— a hot red pepper paste).

## Shopping

Every shopping district in Seoul has a distinct character. Visit popular shopping spots to discover the latest in fashion and beauty trends.

### GAROSU-GIL

Hipsters can be spotted walking the streets here; check out the local boutiques and exclusive shops.

### MYEONG-DONG

Find the K-designs that drive the Hallyu in Myeong-dong, home to the major fashion brand shops.

### NAMDAEMUN & DONGDAEMUN MARKETS

The friendly atmosphere of traditional Korean markets is maintained at these two sizable markets.

### INSA-DONG

Traditional handicraft shops, as well as modern ones, line the street of Insa-dong.

### HONGDAE FREE MARKET

Stop by the free, open art market, where young artists showcase their creations. Open on Saturdays.



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## Hallyu

Discover the city's landmarks featured in K-dramas and trace the steps of the screen celebrities by taking the Hallyu Tour.

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### K-POP ROAD

Hallyu stars can be spotted on K-Pop Road in Cheongdam-dong, where entertainment agencies such as SM, JYP, and CUBE are located.

### K-POP SHOPPING

YG Shop and SMTOWN Coex Artium sell goods related to their idol stars.

### TRADITIONAL KOREAN CULTURE

Get familiar with traditional Korean culture by experiencing kimchi making, tea ceremonies, and Korean calligraphy, and wearing a *hanbok* (Traditional Korean Dress).

### K-DRAMA LOCATION TOUR

Visit the various filming locations for K-Dramas.



## Night Life

Seoul has an abundance of 24-hour cafes, bars, and clubs. Dine under the city's brightly-lit nightscape, then mingle with the locals in trendy and lively entertainment venues.

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### OBSERVATORIES

The N Seoul Tower and the 63 Building are classic vantage points for savoring the brilliant night views over Seoul.

### HANGANG FERRY CRUISE DINNER

Reserve a place on the river cruise, which includes a buffet dinner and jazz performance.

### BEER PUB ALLEYS

Enjoy the night in the beer pubs scattered around the alleys of Jongno and Gangnam.

### CLUBBING

Trendy clubs are concentrated in Hongdae, Itaewon, and Gangnam. Groove to the music with locals.

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## Beauty

Korean beauty tours focus mostly on medical tours at dermatology clinics; however, some hotels and department stores have started operating exclusive beauty programs for visiting tourists.



### COSMETIC ROAD SHOPS

Shopping at local drugstores and cosmetic road shops such as MISSHA and THE FACE SHOP is almost a necessity for most travelers.

### MEDICAL TOUR

Seoul is a famous medical tourism hub, known for up-to-date medical techniques and offered at reasonable prices.

### WELLNESS

Wellness tours emphasize exercise, nutrition, and rest achieved by activities such as visits to spas, massages, and Temple Stay programs.

### SKILLED BEAUTY CARE

Upgrade your style at local nail care shops, oriental medical spas, and beauty salons.



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# Travel Seoul Like a Local

Gwanghwamun & Jongno & City Hall \*  
Myeong-dong \* Hongdae & Sinchon \* Itaewon \*  
Dongdaemun \* Gangnam \* Other Areas



# Gwanghwamun & Jongno & City Hall

Take a walk through the tranquil courtyards of old palaces, then visit art exhibitions and sample traditional foods in the heart of Seoul, where the historic places cohabit with modern culture venues.



wrapped in pink, green, or yellow dumpling skins.

❶ *manduguk* ₩12,000; 12, Baekseokdong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 379 2648

## 00 TONGIN MARKET & GWANGJANG

### MARKET 통인시장 & 광장시장

A *Dosirak* (lunchbox) cafe is located in the Tongin Market; at this market, you can purchase *yeopjeon* (brass coins with a square hole in the middle) and use them as currency to pay for various foods at participating stores. Gwangjang Market is famous for *bindae-tteok* (Mung-Bean Pancake).

❶ *Tongin Market yeopjeon* ₩5,000 (for 10 coins), *bindae-tteok* ₩5,000; 18, Jahamun-ro 15-gil, Jongno-gu (Tongin Market), 02 722 0911 / 88, Changgyeonggung-ro, Jongno-gu (Gwangjang Market), 02 2267 0291

## 01 BALWOO GONGYANG 발우공양

This temple-style vegetarian cuisine restaurant offers a multitude of vegetable side dishes seasoned with its unique *doenjang* (fermented soybean paste) and *gochujang* (chili pepper paste).

❶ *Baramilsang* (10 dishes) ₩27,500; 56, Ujeongguk-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 2031 2081

## 02 GOGUNG 고궁

The restaurant specializes in bibimbap. *Dolsot-bibimbap* (Hot Stone Pot Bibimbap) is a popular dish.

❶ *Jeonju bibimbap* ₩11,000; 44, Insadong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 736 3211

Gogung



## EAT

### 01 TOSOKCHON 토속촌

The seasonal *samgyetang* (Ginseng Chicken Soup) is made with a whole young chicken stuffed with glutinous rice, chestnuts, jujubes, ginseng, etc. The restaurant's aromatic chicken broth and tasty meat can re-energize the body.

❶ *samgyetang* ₩15,000; 5, Jahamun-ro 5-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 737 7444

### 02 JAHA SONMANDU 자하손만두

The signature dish at this restaurant is the *manduguk* (Korean Dumpling Soup). The soup is boiled with handmade *mandu* (dumplings)



Tosokchon



## DAWON 다원

This traditional Korean teahouse is located inside the Kyungin Museum of Fine Art. Its specialties are hot quince tea, toasted *garaetteok* (White Rice Cake), and *yugwa* (Deep-fried, Sweet Rice Cake).

❶ quince tea ₩7,000, *garaetteok* ₩5,000; 11-4, Inсадong 10-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 730 6305

## SEE



## GYEONGBOKGUNG PALACE

The royal palace built during the Joseon Dynasty period perfectly represents the architectural beauty of the time. Changing of the guard ceremonies are held three times a day (10am, 1pm, 3pm).

❶ 9am-5pm (closed on Tuesdays); admission ₩3,000, 161, Sajik-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 3700 3900

## SEOUL PLAZA

The lawn plaza fronting the City Hall is a comfortable relaxation area for Seoulites. Deoksugung Palace and the new City Hall stand close together. The plaza is used as an outdoor ice-skating rink during winter.

❶ 10am-10pm; ice rink ₩1,000 (1 session = 1 hour); 110, Sejong-daero, Jung-gu; 02 120

## CHANGDEOKGUNG & CHANGGYEONGGUNG PALACES

UNESCO World Heritage Changdeokgung Palace has beautiful gardens and ponds; its walking trail is connected to Changgyeonggung Palace.

❶ 9am-5:30pm (closed on Mondays); admission ₩3,000 (Changdeokgung Palace), ₩1,000 (Changgyeonggung Palace); 99, Yulgok-ro, Jongno-gu (Changdeokgung Palace), 02 762 8261 / 185, Changgyeonggung-ro, Jongno-gu (Changgyeonggung Palace), 02 762 4868

## THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, SEOUL

This art and culture complex mainly displays modern art. The museum has a spacious garden, and each exhibit hall is connected by outdoor passages.



Chundangji Pond at  
Changgyeonggung Palaces

❶ 10am-6pm (closed on Mondays); admission ₩4,000; 30, Samcheong-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 3701 9500

## JONGMYO ROYAL SHRINE & CHEONGGYECHEON STREAM

Jongmyo is a royal shrine which houses the spirit tablets of the Joseon kings and is dedicated to the national performance of ancestral rites. Cheonggyecheon, a stream that flows through Jongno and Gwanghwamun, is lit up with colorful lights at night.

❶ 9am-5:30pm; admission ₩1,000; 157, Jong-ro, Jongno-gu (Jongmyo); 02 3672 4332 / 1, Cheonggyecheon-ro, Jung-gu (Cheonggyecheon); 02 2290 7111

## JOGYESA TEMPLE

This Buddhist temple is located in the downtown area, close to the Cheonggyecheon Stream, Insa-dong, and Jongno. Giant golden Buddha statues are housed inside Daeungjeon, the grand, main building of the temple.

❶ 55, Ujeongguk-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 768 8600

## BUKCHON HANOK VILLAGE

Bukchon, meaning "north village," is home to many *hanok* (traditional Korean houses) that showcase the 600-year history of Seoul. Royal family members and *sadaebu* (bureaucrats and educated scholars) of the Joseon Dynasty lived here because of the proximity to the palaces.

❶ 37, Gyedong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 2133 1371

## GWANGHWAMUN SQUARE

Statues of Admiral Yi Sun-shin and King Sejong the Great stand symbolically in the 34-meter-wide and 555-meter-long square stretching from Gwanghwamun to Cheonggye Square.

❶ 172, Sejong-daero, Jongno-gu; 02 120



## SHOP



Ssamzie-gil

### 21 SSAMZIE-GIL

The outdoor passages of this four-story complex give the feeling of walking along Insa-dong's alleys. The complex has about 70 handicraft shops, including small-sized workshops.

**🕒** 10:30am-8:30pm; 44, Insadong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 736 0088

### 22 KCDF GALLERY

The gallery shop showcases and sells some of the finest products made by local artisans, designers, and craftsmen. These include household items, pottery, and woodwork that combine traditional and contemporary style elements.

**🕒** 10am-7pm; 8, Insadong 11-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 733 9041

### 23 KYOBO BOOK CENTER

The flagship branch of Korea's largest bookstore sells books as well as K-Pop CDs, stationery, and gifts; a food court and cafes are located inside the bookstore.

**🕒** 9:30am-10pm; 1, Jong-ro, Jongno-gu; 1544 1900

### 24 KIEHL'S BOUTIQUE

The boutique offers customized beauty services in the form of one-to-one consultations with beauty specialists. It sells limited-edition Kiehl products not found in department stores.

**🕒** 11am-9:30pm; 56-8, Bukchon-ro 5-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 723 1851

### 25 INSADONG MARU

About 60 designer shops are concentrated in this cultural complex. Everything sold here—from foods to handicraft, design, fashion—are representative products made in Korea.

**🕒** 10:30am-8:30pm; 35-4, 6, Insadong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 2223 2500

## STAY



### 26 MYEONGGAJAE

This simple and neat hanok guesthouse has a small garden and rooms decorated with themes related to the four seasons.

**🕒** from ₩150,000; 3-4, Bukchon-ro, 9-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 763 6979; [myeonggajae.com](http://myeonggajae.com)

### 27 THE PLAZA

The five-star hotel nearby City Hall and Deoksugung Palace is also located in the vicinity of large shopping malls such as the Lotte Department Store and Noon Square.

**🕒** from ₩300,000; 119, Sogong-ro, Jung-gu; 02 771 2200, [hoteltheplaza.com](http://hoteltheplaza.com)

### 28 RAKKOJAE

This beautifully restored hanok has a 130-year history. The exclusive guesthouse offers delicious hansik and experience programs for traditional performances and tea ceremonies.

**🕒** from ₩275,000; 49-23 gyedong-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 742 3410; [rkj.co.kr](http://rkj.co.kr)

### 29 MMMIO HOUSE

The guesthouse was renovated from an old house; it has nine rooms with views of Cheonggyecheon Stream and the N Seoul Tower.

**🕒** from ₩330,000; 229, Cheonggyecheon-ro, Jongno-gu; 070 8146 1400; [mmmiohouse.com](http://mmmiohouse.com)

### 30 THE WESTIN CHOSUN SEOUL

The high-end hotel, located near the City Hall Subway Station, has five restaurants, cafes, and a hanok-style outdoor pavilion.

**🕒** from ₩300,000; 106, Sogong-ro, Jung-gu; 02 771 0500; [echosunhotel.com](http://echosunhotel.com)

### 31 SOMERSET PALACE SEOUL

The residence hotel located near Gwanghwamun offers suites with a living room, bedroom, kitchen, and laundry room.

**🕒** from ₩200,000; 7, Yulgok-ro 2-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 6730 8888; [somersepalace.co.kr](http://somersepalace.co.kr)



# Myeong-dong

Myeong-dong is a well-known shopping destination where each alley is packed with a variety of shops. The area is at the heart of the cultural, artistic, and economic center of Seoul. Myeong-dong's shops, which carry the latest fashion trends, are spread around historic buildings that preserve Seoul's modern culture history.



## EAT

### 1 MYEONG-DONG GYOJA 명동교자

The restaurant's signature dish is *kal-guksu* (noodles boiled in a chicken broth with meat, dumplings, and vegetables). The popularity of the eatery means there are always long queues of customers waiting for a table.

1 *kalguksu* ₩8,000, 29, Myeongdong 10-gil, Jung-gu; 02 776 5348

### 2 JINGOGAE 진고개

This 50-year-old restaurant is famous for *galbi-jjim* (Braised Short Ribs) and *gejang* (Marinated Crabs).



1 *galbi-jjim* ₩17,000; 19-1, Chungmu-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2267 0955

### 3 N GRILL

A Michelin one-star chef prepares the grilled cuisine at N Grill. The rotating restaurant is located on the top floor of the N Seoul Tower, and it provides a panoramic, 360° view of Seoul.

1 *dinner* from ₩95,000; 105, Namsangongwon-gil, Yongsan-gu; 02 3455 9297

### 4 O SULLOC TEA HOUSE

The cafe serves desserts and drinks made with high-quality green tea leaves grown in Jeju Island. Green tea latte with green tea, chocolate, and milk is highly recommended.

1 *green tea latte* ₩5,500; 12, Myeongdong 7-gil, Jung-gu; 02 774 5460

### 5 MOKMYEOKSANBANG 목역산방

The traditional-style restaurant with a view of the Namsan Mountain serves traditional Korean foods such as bibimbap and makgeolli. Tasty, brewed Korean teas are also recommended at this wooden restaurant.

1 *sanbang bibimbap* ₩7,000; 125-72, Namsangongwon-gil, Jung-gu; 02 318 4790

### 6 HADONGKWAN 하동관

Only two dishes are offered here: *gomtang* (slowly simmered soup made with beef bones, brisket, etc.) and *suyuk* (boiled beef or pork slices). Gomtang is made with Korean beef and is said to re-invigorate the body.

1 *gomtang* ₩13,000; 12, Myeongdong 9-gil, Jung-gu; 02 776 5656



## 7 SUNGNYEMUN GATE

National Treasure No. 1, Sungnyemun (also known as Namdaemun) Gate was the symbol of Seoul during the Joseon Dynasty, being the biggest gate of the time. It was destroyed by fire in an arson incident in 2008 and subsequently restored closer to its original form; the reconstruction was completed in 2013.

① 40, Sejong-daero, Jung-gu

## 4 N SEOUL TOWER

The tower atop the Namsan Mountain is one of the city's landmarks. The cable car that runs from the base of the Namsan Mountain to the tower is a smart choice for a panoramic view of Seoul.

① 10am-11pm; cable car ₩8,500 rtn.; 105, Namsangongwon-gil, Yongsan-gu; 02 3455 9277

## 6 CULTURE STATION SEOUL 284

This Renaissance-style building was built in 1925 and housed the former Seoul Station. It was converted into a cultural complex with an exhibition hall in 2011, and is now open to the public as a cultural space.

① 10am-7pm; 1, Tongil-ro, Jung-gu; 02 3407 3500

## 10 NAMSANGOL HANOK VILLAGE

This park was created when five different yangban (ruling class or gentry of the Joseon Dynasty) houses were moved at the foot of the Namsan Mountain. Korean folk games, traditional music performances, and traditional culture classes are held on its premises.

① 9am-8pm (closed on Tuesdays); 28, Toegye-ro 34-gil, Jung-gu; 02 2261 0511

Culture Station Seoul 284



## 11 MYEONG-DONG CATHEDRAL

This is Korea's first catholic parish church; its majestic Gothic-style building is one of the city's landmarks. People enjoy taking a break in St. Mary's Garden, located in the cathedral's backyard.

① 9am-9pm; 74, Myeongdong-gil, Jung-gu; 02 774 1784

## 12 NATIONAL THEATER OF KOREA

The theater was founded by the Korean government in 1950 in the hope of developing the local theater scene. Most of the performances held here are related to traditional Korean art. The permanent performance "Midday Concert" is a renowned traditional Korean music concert with commentary.

① 9am-6pm; 59, Jangchungdan-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2280 4114; ntok.go.kr

## SHOP



## 13 NOON SQUARE

Each floor (B2-8F) of this shopping complex is packed with fashion and cosmetic brand shops, movie theaters, and restaurants, and even a bookstore. Shop, eat, or just have a rest at one of the building's many venues.

① 11am-10pm; 14, Myeongdong-gil, Jung-gu; 02 3783 5005

## 14 LOTTE DEPARTMENT STORE & DUTY FREE SHOP

Lotte has several buildings in Myeong-dong: Young Plaza carries fashion brands for the young, while Avenuel deals in luxury brands. Duty-free shops are located on the 9th to 11th floors of the main department store building.

① 10:30am-9pm; 81, Namdaemun-ro, Jung-gu; 02 771 2500; Duty Free Shop 9:30am-9pm

## 15 NAMDAEMUN MARKET

A good number of stores at the market sell everything from household goods and groceries to bags and cameras. Daedo Mall, E Mall (an imported goods mall), and C Mall are recommended.





Myeong-dong

❶ 6am-6:30pm (closed on Sundays); 21, Namdaemun-sijang 4-gil, Jung-gu; 02 753 2805

#### ❷ SHINSEGAE DEPARTMENT STORE

This is Korea's first Western-style department store, opened in the early 1960s. The building retains a modernist architectural style on the exterior, but its interior is contemporary and luxurious.

❶ 10:30am-8pm; 63, Sogong-ro, Jung-gu; 1588 1234

#### ❸ SHILLA DUTY FREE SHOP

Hotel Shilla operates luxury duty free shops on three floors of its building. From here, free shuttle buses run around downtown Seoul areas, including Myeong-dong, Itaewon, and Gwanghwamun.

❶ 9:30am-9pm; 249, Dongho-ro, Jung-gu; 1688 1110

#### ❹ OLIVE YOUNG FLAGSHIP STORE

The cosmetic multi-shop deals in various domestic and foreign cosmetics and provides a space for customers to try its cosmetic products.

❶ 10am-10:30pm; 53, Myeongdong-gil, Jung-gu; 02 736 5290

## STAY



### ❶ SEOUL BACKPACKERS

This accommodation for visiting backpackers offers simple rooms with basic facilities. Its location offers convenient access to Myeong-dong, Namsan, and Seoul Station by public transportation.

❶ from ₩50,000; 15-3, Toegye-ro 2-gil, Jung-gu; 02 3672 1972; [seoulbackpackers.com](http://seoulbackpackers.com)

### ❷ SHILLA HOTEL SEOUL

The hotel is famous for traditional Korean-style accommodation spaces; many state guests have stayed and numerous international events have been held here. The hotel also operates duty free shops.

❶ from ₩300,000; 249, Dongho-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2233 3131; [shillahotels.com](http://shillahotels.com)

### ❸ BANYAN TREE CLUB & SPA SEOUL

Each room provides views of Namsan Mountain at this urban resort located at the foot of the mountain. Its relaxing spa programs are well-known throughout the city.

❶ from ₩460,000; 60, Jangchungdan-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2250 8080; [banyantreeclub.com](http://banyantreeclub.com)

### ❹ METRO HOTEL

The hotel, located at the center of Myeong-dong, opened in 1960 and was the first tourist hotel in Korea. Renovated rooms have chic decorations and provide nice views.

❶ from ₩88,000; 14, Myeongdong 9ga-gil, Jung-gu; 02 752 1112; [metrohotel.com](http://metrohotel.com)

### ❺ SMALL HOUSE BIG DOOR

This boutique hotel has a bistro and a gallery on the 1st floor. It offers simple and neat rooms with minimalist-style furniture.

❶ from ₩93,000; 6, Namdaemun-ro 9-gil, Jung-gu; 02 2038 8191; [smallhousebigdoor.com](http://smallhousebigdoor.com)





# Hongdae & Sinchon

Cafes, clubs, underground music, a free market, indie culture—

Hongdae is always referred to with one of these words. The streets of Hongdae pulsate with young energy and generate Korea's latest trends.



Samgeori Pujutgan

## EAT



### 1 MUDAERUK 무대록

At this restaurant and bar you can enjoy jazz, classical, traditional Korean music, as well as live performances by indie bands. The 2nd floor is used as a workshop for artists.

① draft beer from ₩5,000; 12, Tojeong-ro 5-gil, Mapo-gu; 02 332 8333; mudaeruk.com

### 2 SAMGEORI PUJUTGAN 살거리 푸줏간

Try some Korean BBQ at this sophisticated restaurant run by YG Entertainment. It also provides a separate pub space, which has a nice selection of beer.

① one plate of pujutgan ₩33,000; 72, Wausan-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 337 3892

### 3 SLOBBIE

The restaurant is adored by tourists, as well as Seoulites who live alone. It serves healthy food made with fresh ingredients and vegetables in season, grown in the restaurant's private garden. The menu changes daily.

① from ₩8,000; 10, Hongik-ro 6-gil, Mapo-gu; 02 3143 5525

### 4 MULDWINDA 물윈다

This pub serves traditional Korean alcoholic drinks brewed at their own facilities, as well as side dishes such as *buchujeon* (Asian Chives Pancake) and grilled tofu. The atmosphere Jazz music played in the background gives the locale a unique feeling.

① makgeolli from ₩8,000; 43, Kyonggidae-ro, Seodaemun-gu; 02 392 4200

### 5 aA DESIGN MUSEUM CAFE

The cafe is located inside the aA Design Museum, a design furniture gallery whose owner showcases Korean and European furniture that he has collected for the past 20 years.

① coffee from ₩5,000; 19-18, Wausan-ro 17-gil, Mapo-gu; 02 3143 7311



## SEE



### 1 KT&G SANGSANGMADANG

The multi-cultural complex SangsangMadang represents the indie culture of Hongdae. It holds distinguishing modern art exhibitions across various genres, including pop art and media art. The complex also houses an art market and a movie theater.

1 12pm-11pm; 65, Eoulmadang-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 330 6200; [sangsangmadang.com](http://sangsangmadang.com)

### 2 DONGJIN MARKET

This art market opens on weekends at the former old market site around Yeonnam-dong. Indie publishers and bookstores, design items shops, and restaurants are clustered in the area.

1 1pm-7pm; 98, Seongmisan-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 325 9559

### 3 SINCHON PLAY BUS

This two-story bus was converted into a music space with a DJ box. Here you can enjoy music from different genres and periods, as well as Internet radio selections.

1 11am-9pm; 11, Yonsei-ro 5-gil, Seodaemun-gu; 02 330 1806; [play.sdm.go.kr](http://play.sdm.go.kr)

### 4 CLUB FF

This top live music venue in Hongdae mostly holds rock concerts. Its impressive line-ups include all the hot indie bands in Korea.

1 12, Wausan-ro 17-gil, Mapo-gu; 010 9025 3407; [clubff.modoo.at](http://clubff.modoo.at)

## SHOP



### 1 STYLENANDA FLAGSHIP STORE

This is a brick and mortar shop belonging to the online clothing shopping mall of the same name, whose clientele is mostly women in their 20s and 30s. It sells cosmetics labeled with the store's own brand.

1 11am-11pm; 23, Wausan-ro 29da-gil, Mapo-gu; 02 333 9215

### 1 MECENAT POLIS MALL

This shopping complex located near Hapjeong Subway Station has domestic and foreign cosmetic, fashion, and SPA brand shops, as well as food franchises, movie theaters, and a concert hall.

1 10am-10pm; 45, Yanghwa-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 6357 0108

### 2 THANKS BOOKS

This cozy little bookstore functions as a meeting place for the local community. It deals mainly in design and art books. Book exhibitions are held here regularly.

1 12pm-9pm; 28, Jandari-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 325 0321

### 3 HONGDAE FREE MARKET

Young designers and artists showcase and sell their creations here. Street performances are a common sight at the market.

1 open on Saturdays 1pm-6pm; Hongik University Playground Park (19-3, Wausan-ro 21-gil, Mapo-gu); [freemarket.or.kr](http://freemarket.or.kr)

## STAY



### 1 MARUJI GUESTHOUSE

This remodeled guesthouse is for tourists only. Many charming cafes and galleries are clustered around here.

1 from ₩38,000; 30-4, Yeonnam-ro 5-gil, Mapo-gu; 02 6082 5013; [marujiguesthouse.com](http://marujiguesthouse.com)

### 2 HOTEL THE DESIGNERS

The hotel's rooms are decorated by designers according to several themes. A brunch menu with dishes made with organic ingredients is offered at the cafe on the 1st floor.

1 from ₩170,000; 86, Yanghwa-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 326 5801; [thedesignershotel.com](http://thedesignershotel.com)

### 3 URBANWOOD GUESTHOUSE

The guesthouse has rooms decorated with modern furniture, colorful ornaments, and paintings inspired by nature.

1 from ₩60,000; 5, Wausan-ro 29ma-gil, Mapo-gu; 070 8613 0062; [urbanwood.co.kr](http://urbanwood.co.kr)



# Itaewon

The Itaewon area includes the quiet Hannam-dong, the lively Gyeongridan-gil, which has emerged as a popular hangout place among young people, and the vibrant Haebangchon Art Village, one of the hot spots in Seoul. The area exudes a cosmopolitan, international atmosphere and is home to restaurants that serve foods from around the world.



## EAT

### 1 TACO CHILICHILI

This Mexican fast-food restaurant is famous for inexpensive prices and generous volumes of food. Tacos, fajitas, burritos, and enchiladas satisfy the tastes of both locals and visitors to the area.

**1** taco from ₩3,000; 218, Noksapyeong-daero, Yongsan-gu; 02 797 7219

### 3 VATOS

The bar serves Korean-Mexican dishes, tacos topped with customer-chosen ingredients, and a variety of cocktails.

**1** kimchi carnitas fries ₩12,500; 1, Itaewon-ro 15-gil, Yongsan-gu; 02 797 8226

### 1 BISTECCA

The restaurant is run by one of Korea's first generation of Italian cuisine chefs. Its signature dish is a steak grilled over oak charcoal. Among the dessert offerings, tiramisu is the most recommended.

**1** lunch course from ₩35,000; 49, Hoenamu-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 792 7746

### 4 WESTERN CHINA

This Chinese restaurant, opened in Hannam-dong 10 years ago, specializes in dim sum; ha gow is the best seller.

**1** ha gow ₩6,000; 73, Dokseodang-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 795 6751

### 5 MAYBELL BAKERY 오월의 종

Maybell bakes healthy bread made with wild yeast. Rye bread and baguettes made from Korean flour, salt, water, and wild yeast are popular choices.

**1** fig rye bread ₩2,500; 229, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 792 5561

### 6 LINUS BBQ

Linus BBQ serves Alabama-style BBQ meat smoked over low heat for 12 to 16 hours.

**1** BBQ sandwich ₩12,000; 136-13, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 790 2920

## SEE

### 7 ANTIQUE FURNITURE STREET

This street is packed with over 90 shops that sell vintage furniture and interior design items from Europe.

**1** Bogwang-ro, Yongsan-gu (the street that runs from the Hamilton Hotel to the Crown Hotel); itaewonantique.com



## 10 SEOUL CENTRAL MASJID & GYEDAN MARKET

The Masjid is the first mosque in Korea built in medieval style, with two minarets. Gyedan Market, a flea market where local artists sell their creations, opens on the last Saturday of every month on the stairs at the back of the mosque.

1 39, Usadan-ro 10-gil, Yongsan-gu; 02 793 6908; facebook.com/wosadan

## 11 HAEBANGCHON ART VILLAGE

The village is decorated with about 30 wall paintings and has an eclectic selection of cafes, restaurants, and bars.

1 Sinheung-ro, Yongsan-gu (around Haebangchon); 02 795 2275; arthill100.com

## 12 NATIONAL MUSEUM OF KOREA

The museum has six galleries devoted to permanent exhibitions with a displayed selection over 13,000 pieces of relics that show Korea's history and culture.

1 9am-9pm (closed on Mondays); admission free; 137, Seobinggo-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 2077 9000; museum.go.kr

## SHOP



### 1 BEAKER HANNAM FLAGSHIP STORE

This selection shop deals in domestic and international brands and features an interior made from recycled materials. The shop sells trendy fashion items and household goods.

1 11am-8pm; 241, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 070 4118 5216

### 12 MO JAIN SONG

This concept store run by Korean fashion designer Song Ja-in has a sophisticated selection of gardening tools, perfumes, candles, and handmade accessories.

1 11am-8pm; 257, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 797 6231

### 13 SERIES CORNER

This shop offers Korean brands of men's wear, wood furniture brands by Korean designers,



Millimeter Milligram (MMM)

and quality pet supplies. It also operates a cafe.

1 11am-9pm; 244, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 797 0710

### 14 MILLIMETER MILLIGRAM (MMM)

This place, run by Korean stationery design brand MMM, integrates a cafe, a bookstore, and a stationery shop.

1 11am-9pm; 240, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 3210 1601

## STAY



### 15 GRAND HYATT SEOUL

The hotel is located on the side of the Namsan Mountain and is known for its spa and Club JJ. The hotel's outdoor pool is turned into an ice rink during winters.

1 from ₩300,000; 322, Sowol-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 797 1234; seoul.grand.hyatt.com

### 16 G GUESTHOUSE

Stay in the company of travelers from around the world at this guesthouse. A weekly BBQ party is held on the building's rooftop.

1 from ₩40,000; 14-38, Bogwang-ro 60-gil, Yongsan-gu; 02 795 0015; gguest.com

### 17 TIGER HOUSE

This guesthouse and multi-cultural space offers entertaining activities such as painting, swimming, and book exchanging.

1 from ₩35,000; 95, Usadan-ro 10-gil, Yongsan-gu; 070 4645 4339; tigerhouseinseoul.com

### 18 IMPERIAL PALACE BOUTIQUE HOTEL

The hotel offers stylish rooms equipped with high-tech gadgetry such as iPod stations.

1 from ₩121,000; 221, Itaewon-ro, Yongsan-gu; 02 3702 8000; ipboutiquehotel.com



# Dongdaemun

The streets of Dongdaemun are illuminated day and night by the sparkling lights of its imposing department stores. The city's vibrant atmosphere can be seen and felt from the Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP) to the Daehangno area.



## EAT



Sintang-dong Tteokbokki Town

### 1 SINTANG-DONG TTEOKBOKKI TOWN

Sintang-dong is famous for its *tteok-bokki* (a snack made from soft rice

cake, fish cake, and red chili sauce) alley. The oldest restaurant here, Ma Bok-lim Tteokbokki serves *jeukseok tteok-bokki* (tteokbokki boiled on the spot).

1 from ₩11,000; 5, Dasan-ro 3-gil, Jung-gu; 02 2232 8930

### 3 BLT STEAK

The restaurant located on the 2nd floor of JW Marriott Dongdaemun Square Seoul specializes in New York strip steak made from prime Korean beef dry-aged for two weeks.

1 strip steak from ₩115,000; 279, Cheonggyecheon-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 2276 3330

### 3 JANGCHUNG-DONG JOKBAL STREET

Among many jokbal restaurants, Wonjo Jangchung-dong Halmeoniip is most recommended. Jokbal is served with various vegetables.

1 from ₩30,000; located 50 meters from Exit 3 of the Dongguk University Station (subway line 3)

### 3 SOLLAMUGIL DOENJANGESUL

#### 솔나무길 된장예술

The restaurant offers healthy foods cooked with *doenjang* (Korean Soybean Paste) and tofu. Its specialty is bibimbap with a tasty doenjang stew and various vegetables.

1 doenjang bibimbap from ₩9,500; 9-2, Daehak-ro 11-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 745 4516

## SEE

### 3 NAKSAN PARK

Walk from Dongdaemun Gate to Naksan Park, in Hyehwa-dong, on a two-kilometer-long trail along the old fortress wall.

1 54, Naksan-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 743 7985

### 3 PUNG MUL MARKET

This market specializes in Korean folk culture. Specialties from all over the country, craftwork, and traditional foods can be found here.

1 10am-7pm; 21, Cheonho-daero 4-gil, Dongdaemun-gu; 02 2232 3367



## 7 HEUNGJINJIMUN GATE

The original name of Treasured Object No. 1, Dongdaemun, is Heungjinjimun. It was the east gate to Seoul's fortress—one of the eight gates built by King Taejo of the Joseon Dynasty to protect *Hanseongbu* (the capital of the Joseon Dynasty), where major national infrastructures were concentrated.

1 288, Jong-ro, Jongno-gu

## 8 DONGDAEMUN DESIGN PLAZA

This multi-cultural space designed by world-famous architect Zaha Hadid holds exhibitions, performances, and fashion shows. It is also home to a fashion design market and a park.

1 10am-9pm; admission ₩8,000; 281, Eulji-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2153 0000; ddp.or.kr

## 9 IHWA MURAL VILLAGE

Every street corner from Hyehwa-dong to Naksan Park is adorned with pretty wall paintings. Ten artists participated in the project to decorate the old walls and stairs with artistic murals.

1 Ihwajang-gil, Jongno-gu

## SHOP



## 10 DOOTA

This leading fashion mall at Dongdaemun is packed with over 100 shops run by Korean designers. The mall stays open until 5am on Fridays and Saturdays, which makes for some enjoyable late-night shopping.

1 10:30am-5am; 275, Jangchungdan-ro, Jung-gu; 02 3398 2386

## 11 SHIN PHYEONG HWA FASHION TOWN

This fashion market sells a variety of clothes in its five-story building (basement through the 4th floor). Workers in the fashion industry from across Korea come to this mall, where new trends are always created.

1 9pm-12pm; 298, Cheonggyecheon-ro, Jung-gu; 02 2253 0714

## 12 LOTTE FIT IN

The mall has exclusive designer brand shops,

in contrast to the neighboring malls, which deal mostly in local designer brands. Additionally, Lotte Fit In promises the quality and service found in high-end department stores.

1 11am-12am; 264, Eulji-ro, Jung-gu; 02 6262 4000

## 13 DONGDAEMUN SHOPPING COMPLEX

The complex sells fabrics, clothing subsidiary materials, accessories, etc. Most of the domestically distributed fabrics come from this complex.

1 8am-6pm (closed on Sundays); 266, Jong-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 2262 0114

## STAY



## 14 JW MARRIOTT DONGDAEMUN SQUARE SEOUL

The hotel is located in the Dongdaemun area, among a concentration of shopping centers. Its rooftop bar offers night views of Heungjinjimun Gate and has top-class bartenders.

1 from ₩250,000; 279, Cheonggyecheon-ro, Jongno-gu; 02 2276 3000; jwmarrriottddm.com

## 15 MINARI HOUSE

The guesthouse was designed by an artist who also operates a gallery, a cafe, and an artist residency.

1 from ₩40,000; 3, Ihwajang 1na-gil, Jongno-gu; 070 8656 3303; minarihouse.com

## 16 HANOK JIN HOUSE

This hanok guesthouse has rooms decorated with traditional ornaments and furniture. All the rooms are equipped with a kitchen and a bathroom.

1 from ₩45,000; 02 0762 7406; 12-24, Jong-ro 65-gil, Jongno-gu; hosteltokorea.com

## 17 HOTEL TONG VIVACE DONGDAEMUN

The hotel offers a perfect location that provides convenient access to main tourist attractions: the DDP, Gwangjang Market, and Cheonggyecheon Stream.

1 from ₩70,000; 23, Jong-ro 48-gil, Jongno-gu; 02 747 9710; tonghotel.com/vivace



# Gangnam

This business district is developed around Samseong-dong and Gangnam Subway Station area. In addition, luxurious cafes, restaurants, and department stores are concentrated around the Sinsa-dong, Apgujeong, and Cheongdam-dong neighborhoods. The district also boasts cultural and historical sites such as the Bongeunsa Temple and Seonjeongneung Tombs.



## EAT

### 1 JUNGSIK 정식당

Chef Yim Jung-sik offers an innovative Korean cuisine by cooking Western dishes with Korean ingredients at this restaurant. Both of his restaurants in Seoul and New York are highly recognized.

① lunch course from ₩50,000; 11, Seolleung-ro, 158-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 517 4654

### 3 SAMWON GARDEN 삼원가든

This restaurant has served top-class meat dishes for more than 30 years. National guests often visit this revered hanok restaurant. Its specialties are *bulgogi* (Marinated, Barbecued Meat) and *yangnyeom galbi* (Marinated, De-

boned Beef Short Ribs).

① *bulgogi* ₩35,000; 835, Eonju-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 548 3030

### 3 FAMILLE STATION

About 30 trendy restaurant brands are clustered at this location. Korean food buffet restaurant Olbaan and tteok-bokki restaurant Villa de Spicy are particularly popular.

① Central City, 176, Sinbanpo-ro, Seocho-gu; 02 6282 0114

### 3 CAFE DIOR BY PIERRE HERME

Enjoy the macarons, chocolates, and cakes prepared by French patissier Pierre Herme in the rooftop (5F) cafe of the Christian Dior Boutique.

① macaron set ₩22,000; 464, Apgujeong-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 513 0390

### 3 HANCHU 한추

This restaurant is old and shabby, but the taste of its chicken is considered among the best in Seoul. Deep-fried chili peppers, a favorite among regular customers, are also tasty.

① fried chicken ₩17,000; 68, Nonhyeon-ro 175-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 541 0969

### 3 GAEHWAOK 개화옥



GaehwaoK

This Korean food restaurant offers *bossam* (pork boiled in spices), *bulgogi*, *doenjang jjigae* (Soybean Paste Stew), and noodles. All the foods are served in brassware and go great with wine.

① *bulgogi* ₩29,700; 7, Apgujeong-ro 50-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 549 1459

### 3 CECI CELA

Carrot cake made from fresh milk cream and cheese cream is a must-eat at this patisserie



shop. The cake is offered during limited hours—it is sold only twice a day, at 11am and at 7pm.

① carrot cake (piece) ₩8,800; 10-4, Dosan-daero 45-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 3448 7100

## SEE



Seorae Village

### ④ SEORAE VILLAGE

It is also called the “French Village.” A host of open-air cafes, restaurants, and shops are lined along its streets. Locals hold a Christmas market on the first Saturday of December.

① Seorae-ro, Seocho-gu region, a 10-minute walk from Express Bus Terminal Subway Station

### ④ DOSAN PARK

The park was built to honor the patriotism and passion for public education of Dosan Ahn Chang-ho. The Horim Art Center, located near the park, is known for its gorgeous building that resembles a comb-pattern piece of pottery.

① 20, Dosan-daero, 45-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 541 3525

### ④ BONGEUNSA TEMPLE

This Buddhist temple with a history of over 1,000 years houses valuable Buddhist cultural items. The temple operates Temple Stay programs that allow relaxation of body and mind in beautiful surroundings of hanok nestled in peaceful gardens.

① 531, Bongeunsa-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 3218 4800; [bongeunsa.org](#)

### ④ NATIONAL GUGAK CENTER

This is Korea’s first gugak (traditional Korean music) museum. It opened in 1995 and it has

about 6,000 artifacts related to gugak.

① 9am-6pm; (Closed on Monday); admission free; 2364, Nambusunhwan-ro, Seocho-gu; 02 580 3130; [gugak.go.kr](#)

### ④ LG ART CENTER

This is a multi-purpose venue for art expressed in a variety of genres, including performances by world-class artists, dance musicals, theater, and dances.

① 9am-6pm; 508, Nonhyeon-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 2005 0114; [lgart.com](#)

### ④ SEONJEONGNEUNG TOMBS

The tombs of Seongjong (the 9th king of the Joseon Dynasty), his second wife Queen Jeonghyeon, and his son Jungjong (the 11th king of the Joseon Dynasty) are collectively called Seonjeongneung.

① 6am-9pm; 1, Seolleung-ro 100-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 568 1291

## SHOP



### ④ SSG FOOD MARKET & MY BOON

This high-end food market sells rare imported ingredients and has a selection shop with fashion brands from overseas designers.

① 10am-10pm; 442, Dosan-daero, Gangnam-gu; 1588 1234

### ④ 10 CORSO COMO

The shop deals in an exclusive selection of international fashion brands. It is a favorite among Korean celebrities, and it has a cafe that serves meals and desserts.

① 11am-8pm; 416, Apgujeong-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 3018 1010

### ④ COEX MALL & PARNAS MALL

The largest shopping mall in Gangnam showcases famous brands from home and abroad. SMTOWN Coex Artium, a Hallyu center, is located next to the mall.

① 10:30am-10pm; 513, Yeongdong-daero, Gangnam-gu; 02 6002 5300



### **GALLERIA DEPARTMENT STORE**

The east building of the department store deals in top luxury brands, while the west building offers casual brands. Popular restaurants such as Gourmet 494 are located in the basement food mall.

**1** 10:30am-8pm; 407, Apgujeong-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 3449 4114

### **HYUNDAI DEPARTMENT STORE**

The department store is directly connected to the Apgujeong Subway Station, so it is convenient to access by public transportation. Here you can pay in dollars, yuan, or yen.

**1** 10:30am-8pm; 165, Apgujeong-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 547 2233

### **LINE FRIENDS FLAGSHIP STORE**

The shop sells more than 2,000 items, including stationery, accessories, and dolls inspired by on-line messenger LINE characters.

**1** 10:30am-9:30pm; 27, Dosan-daero 13-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 3448 1764



## **STAY**



### **HOTEL LA CASA**

This boutique hotel, located on Garosu-gil Street, is operated by Korean lifestyle shop Casamia. Rooms are decorated with stylish furniture.

**1** from ₩166,000; 83, Dosan-daero 1-gil, Gangnam-gu; 02 546 0088; hotellacasa.kr

### **NOVOTEL AMBASSADOR GANGNAM**

This five-star hotel is equipped with facilities that include a European and a Japanese restaurant.

**1** from ₩224,000; 130, Bongeunsa-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 567 1101; ambatel.com/gangnam

### **THE GRAND INTERCONTINENTAL SEOUL PARNAS**

The hotel operates a business center and a computer station for business tourists, and is close to the Hyundai Department Store and Coex Mall.

**1** from ₩310,000; 521, Teheran-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 555 5656; grandicparnas.com

### **IMPERIAL PALACE SEOUL**

This European-style business hotel operates free shuttle buses to neighboring sights such as the Dosan Park and the Museum of Korean Embroidery.

**1** from ₩241,000; 640, Eonju-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 3440 8000; imperialpalace.co.kr

### **RITZ CARLTON SEOUL**

The hotel is located near the Gangnam and Sin Nonhyeon subway stations, so it can be easily accessed via public transportation. Staff welcome the hotel's guests in traditional Korean costumes.

**1** from ₩38,000; 120, Bongeunsa-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 3451 8000; ritzcarltonseoul.com

### **PARK HYATT SEOUL**

The hotel is located at the center of Gangnam, near tourist attractions such as the Coex Mall and Bongeunsa Temple. The hotel's restaurant is well known for its brunch menu.

**1** from ₩420,000; 606, Teheran-ro, Gangnam-gu; 02 2016 1234; seoul.park.hyatt.kr





# Other Areas

Areas such as Yeouido, Yeongdeungpo, and Jamsil also contain unique aspects of Seoul. Experience the engaging attractions of these destinations, from large shopping malls and restaurants to theme parks, and even a national park.

## EAT



### PAJEON ALLEY; KYUNG HEE UNIVERSITY

Many restaurants around the university town serve *pajeon* (pancake-like Korean dish made with green onions, various seafood, and vegetables), which goes well with makgeolli. *Haemul pajeon* (Seafood Pajeon) is popular here.

① *haemul pajeon* ₩7,000; 3, Hoegi-ro 28-gil, Dongdaemun-gu; 02 968 2494

### JINJUJIP 진주집

When the cold wind starts to blow during the winter season, Koreans love to eat *dak kalguksu* (Noodle Soup with Chicken), a dish made with generous amounts of chicken meat and dumplings.

① *dak kalguksu* ₩7,000; 33, Gukjegeumyeong-ro 6-gil, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 780 6108

### WALKING ON THE CLOUD

This European-style restaurant with a Mediterranean twist is located on the 59th floor of the 63 Building. Its menu includes prime tenderloin steak and lobster dishes. The restaurant also operates a bar with a cozy mood.

① *lunch course* from ₩49,000; 50, 63-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 789 5904

### NORYANGJIN FISH MARKET

Just about every kind of seafood, brought from all parts of the country, is auctioned at this market. Here you can buy your seafood selection and have it cooked and served at one of the restaurants on the upper floor.

① *open 24 hours (closed on Sundays)*; 688, Nodeul-ro, Dongjak-gu; 02 814 2211

### SILLIM-DONG SUNDAE TOWN

Sundae is a Korean dish made by boiling or steaming cow's or pig's intestines that have been stuffed with various ingredients. The locale is known for *sundae bokkeum* (Stir-fried Korean Blood Sausage). You can choose either *baek sundae* (non-spicy) or *yangnyeom sundae* (gochujang sauce added).

① *Sundae bokkeum* ₩7,500; Subway Line 2 Sillim Station Exit 3

## SEE



### BUKHANSAN NATIONAL PARK

This mountain's proximity to Seoul makes it easy to visit. Hiking trails departing from Pyeongchang-dong or Gupabal offer scenic views and are suitable for beginners.

① 262, Bogukmun-ro, Seongbuk-gu; 02 909 0494; [bukhan.knps.or.kr](http://bukhan.knps.or.kr)

### DREAM FOREST

This large green park measuring 660,000m<sup>2</sup> hosts the Dream Forest Art Center, a performance complex comprising a performance hall, a concert hall, cafes, and restaurants.

① 173, Wolgye-ro, Gangbuk-gu; 02 2289 4001; [dreamforest.seoul.go.kr](http://dreamforest.seoul.go.kr)

### LOTTE WORLD

This is the most spacious indoor amusement park in Korea. Enjoy thrilling rides during the day and fancy parades in the evening.

① 9am-10pm; one-day pass ₩48,000; 240, Olympic-ro, Songpa-gu; 1661 2000

### 63 BUILDING

This skyscraper provides fantastic views over



Seoul. A gallery, a movie theater, and famous restaurants are also located in the building.

❶ 10am-10pm; 50, 63-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 789 5663; 63.co.kr

### HANGANG E-LAND CRUISE

Hop on this cruise in Yeouido and enjoy a live concert, a great meal, and terrific night views of the Hangang River and the city.

❶ 11:30am-9:20pm; from ₩12,000; Yeouido Quay (280 Yeouido-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu); 02 3271 6900; elandcruise.com

### DIGITAL MEDIA CITY (DMC)

Watch exhibitions that combine IT technology with culture content based on high-tech digital media.

❶ 10am-6pm (closed on Sundays); 366, World Cup buk-ro, Mapo-gu; 02 309 7067; dmc.seoul.kr

## SHOP



### IFC MALL

This large mall occupying in the 1st through the 3rd basement levels of the Yeouido IFC Building houses fashion and cosmetic shops, a movie theater complex, and restaurants.

❶ 10am-10pm; 10, Gukjegeumyung-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 6137 5000

### D-CUBE CITY

This multi-cultural space has a hotel, a department store, a theater for musical performances, as well as offices and a residential area. Experience a variety of cultural activities and shopping in one location.

❶ 11am-9:30pm.; 662, Gyeongin-ro, Guro-gu; 02 2622 2233

### TIMES SQUARE

This entertainment and culture complex comprises the Shinsegae Department Store, movie theaters, a large bookstore, a theme park for kids, and a live concert pub.

❶ 10:30am-10pm; 15, Yeongjung-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 238 2000

### LOTTE WORLD MALL

This mall is located in a mega-sized skyscraper and is packed with fashion, furniture, and electronics shops, a large mart, duty free shops, and the largest aquarium in Korea.

❶ 10:30am-10pm; 300, Olympic-ro, Songpa-gu; 02 3213 5000

## STAY



### CONRAD SEOUL HOTEL

The hotel has a perfect location for easy access to neighboring tourist attractions such as the Yeouido Hangang Park, IFC Mall, Noryangjin Fish Market, Times Square, and 63 Building.

❶ from ₩400,000; 10, Gukjegeumyung-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 6137 7000; conradseoul.co.kr

### HOTEL LOFT

Pick your favorite style from among 14 rooms decorated in various themes, from classical to funky.

❶ from ₩200,000; 72, Seonyudong 2-ro, Yeongdeungpo-gu; 02 2671 9996; hotel-loft.co.kr

### LOTTE HOTEL WORLD

This hotel is directly connected to Lotte World and provides easy access to the Lotte World Mall and Songpa Naru Park, making it a convenient accommodation choice.

❶ from ₩260,000; 240, Olympic-ro, Songpa-gu; 02 419 7000; lottehotel.com/world

### W SEOUL WALKERHILL

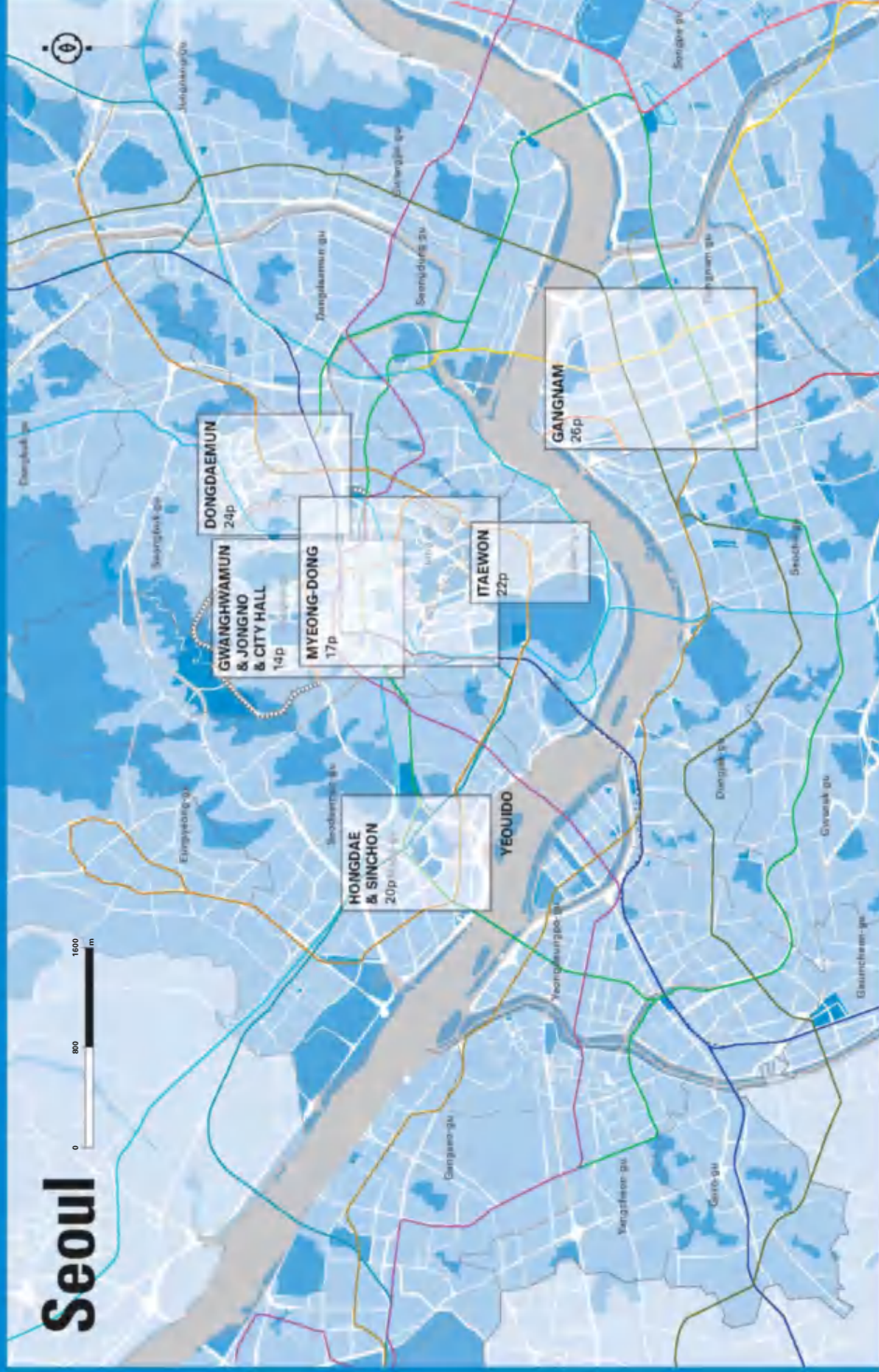
One of the city's best-designed hotels, the 'W' offers rooms with Hangang River or mountain views.

❶ from ₩295,000; 177, Walkerhill-ro, Gwangjin-gu; 02 465 2222; wseoul.com



# Seoul

0 800 1600 m





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Cheonggyecheon		15		Kiehl's Boutique	16		Shilla Duty Free Shop	19	
Club FF		21		KT&G SangsangMadang	21		Shilla Hotel Seoul	19	
Coex Mall & Parnas Mall		27		Kyobo Book Center	16		Shin Pheong hwa Fashion Town	25	
Conrad Seoul Hotel		30					Shinsegae Department Store	19	
Culture Station Seoul 284		18	L	LG Art Center	27		Sillim-dong Sundae Town	29	
		LINE Friends Flagship Store		28		Sinchon Play Bus	21		
		Linus BBQ		22		Sindangdong Tteokbokki Town	24		
D				Lotte Department Store	18		Slobbie	20	
	Dawon	15		& Duty Free Shop	25		Small House Big Door	19	
	D-Cube City	30		Lotte Fit In	29		Sollamugil Doenjangyesul	24	
	Digital Media City (DMC)	30		Lotte World	30		Somerses Palace Seoul	16	
	Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP)	25		Lotte World Mall			Ssamzie-gil	16	
	Dongdaemun Shopping Complex	25	M		21		SSG Food Market & My Boon	27	
	Dongjin Market	21		Maruji Guesthouse	22		Stylenanda Flagship Store	21	
	Doota	25		Maybell Bakery	21		Sungnyemun	18	
	Dosan Park	27		Mecenat Polis Mall	19				
	Dream Forest	29		Metro Hotel	23	T	Taco Chilichili	22	
			Millimeter Milligram (MMM)	25	Thanks Books		21		
					The Grand InterContinental Seoul Parnas		28		
F							The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul	15	
	Famille Station	26		Minari House	16		The Plaza Hotel	16	
				Mmmio House	23		The Westin Chosun Seoul	16	
				MO Jain Song	17		Tiger House	23	
				Mokmyeoksanbang	20		Times Square	30	
				Mudaeruk	20		Tongin Market	14	
				Muldwindu	18		Tosokchon	14	
				Myeong-dong Cathedral	17	U	Urbanwood Guesthouse	21	
				Myeong-dong Gyoja	16			Vatos	22
				Myeonggajae					
G			N			V			
	G Guesthouse	23		N Grill	17				
	Gaehwaok	26		N Seoul Tower	18				
	Galleria Department Store	28		Naksan Park	24	W	W Seoul Walkerhill	30	
	Gogung	14		Namdaemun Market	18		Walking on the Cloud	29	
	Grand Hyatt Seoul	23		Namsangol Hanok Village	27		Western China	22	
	Grand Hyatt Seoul	23		National Gugak Center	23	Etc	10 Corso Como	27	
	Gwanghwamun Square	15		National Museum of Korea	18		63 Building	29	
	Gwangjang Market	14		National Theater of Korea	18				
	Gyeongbokgung	15		Noon Square	29				
			Noryangjin Fish Market	28					
H				Novotel Ambassador Gangnam					
	Hadongkwan	17							
	Haebangchon Art Village	23							
	Hanchu	26							
	Hangang E-Land Cruise	30							
	Hanok Jin House	25							
	Heunginjimun Gate	25							
	Hongdae Free Market	21							
	Hotel La Casa	28							
	Hotel Loft	30							
Hotel Lotte World	30								
Hotel the Designers	21								
Hotel Tong Vivace	25								
Dongdaemun	25								
Hyundai Department Store	28								



# What's the Best Souvenir in Korea?

Red ginseng, Korea's representative specialty, encounters 8 best spots in Korea!

**Korean Red Ginseng Extract MEMORIES IN KOREA**



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- Eight historical, cultural and natural spots in Korea elaborately printed on each bottle!
- Best choice for cherishing memories of your trip to Korea!
- The combination of health and tourist spots makes perfect presents for your beloved ones!

The Korean Red Ginseng Extract Tour Edition, made of 100 percent red ginseng extract, offers enhanced value as a travel souvenir, as each of the eight Korean Red Ginseng Extract bottles (30g ea.) is matched with one of Korea's eight tourist spots. When all of the eight bottles are put together, a whole landscape painting is completed. Scan the QR code with your mobile phone to get information on the tourist spots in Chinese and English with ease. The products are available at duty-free shops in Korea. MSRP 264,000 won



## Korean Red Ginseng Extract

Cheong-Kwan-Jang has been certified as "The World No.1 Ginseng Brand" in the category of Ginseng Brand by Euromonitor International. Ltd. Korean Red Ginseng Extract

is Korea's No. 1 health functional food and has excellent remedial effects such as enhancing the immune system and boosting energy and endurance. In particular, the Red Ginseng Extract is a product that contains a variety of well-balanced and effective components by using concentrated extracts from high-quality, six-year-old ginseng roots, based on top-notch manufacturing technology built for 100 years.

## The Korean Red Ginseng Extract Tour Edition, 8 Memories In Korea



### 1. Changdeokgung Palace

**Virtue** The Changdeokgung Palace, one of the most representative architectures in East Asia, is the king's garden.

### 2. Andong Hahoe Folk Village

**Joy** This traditional village where the Joseon Dynasty's Confucian tradition is carried on in modern lifestyles, is a living legacy.



### 3. Bulguksa Temple & Seokgulam Grotto

**Longevity** Ancient people's dream of good health and longevity resides in the Bulguk Temple and the Seokguram Grotto in Gyeongju, the capital of a thousand year kingdom.

### 4. National Museum of Korea

**Development** Encounter the humankind's creativity and development at the treasure house of Korea's 5,000 years of history and culture.



### 5. Seoul City Wall & Sungnyemun Gate

**Prosperity** On the roads along the old fortress wall of Seoul, a heaven-sent capital city, unfold the prosperity and glory of the 600-year-old capital.



### 6. Seoraksan National Park

**Beauty** The Seoraksan National Park is full of scenic beauties in which graceful terrains are in harmony with snow-covered rock formations, clear stream water and small hermitages.



### 7. Seongsan Ilchulbong Peak

**Luck** The sun rising beyond a natural citadel created by the explosion of an underwater volcano on the blue waters of Jeju Island is special and precious.



### 8. Hangang River

**Romance** Seoul's lifeline where romance flows at nightfall, when the bridges on the

Hangang River are lighted up one by one and river cruises preparing to sail away, the city changes into romantic dress.





# Seoul

Insider's Guide

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